

PRIMARY

**Leader/
Teacher
Guide**



**Fourth Quarter
Year C**

Primary Leader/Teacher Guide

A Sabbath School Resource for Leaders/Teachers of Primary Children
GraceLink Sabbath School Curriculum



www.gracelink.net

Year C, Fourth Quarter

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Bible Study Overview

Lessons one through four are about learning to serve at home.

- I serve God when I am kind to those invited to my home.
- I serve God when I willingly help others.
- I can serve Jesus at home.
- When we help people who serve God, we serve Him too.

Lessons five through nine tell us that God keeps His promises.

- Because of God's grace, my sins are forgiven when I ask Him.
- God keeps His promises.
- God holds me in His hands and molds me.
- God gives me the grace and power to do His will.
- I know God keeps His promises, because Bible prophecies come true.

Lessons ten through fourteen remind us that worshiping is sharing our love for Jesus.

- I worship God when I tell others about His goodness and love.
- I worship God when I tell others about my love for Him.
- I worship God when I listen to the good news about Jesus.
- I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.
- I worship God with my offerings.

God's grace. *Grace* is a word that helps explain God's love in action toward people who don't deserve it.

- Grace is God's love providing Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for our sins.
- Grace is God's love encouraging us to accept that sacrifice.
- Grace is God's love inspiring us to respond in praise and worship.
- Grace is God's love giving us the wisdom and strength to treat one another with love and respect, just the way He treats us.



**So welcome to *GraceLink*. God's grace is power.
It's the unlimited, for-sure, forever power that
finds you and fills you up with everything
you need to live a full and wonderful life
in Him.**



To the leaders/teachers,

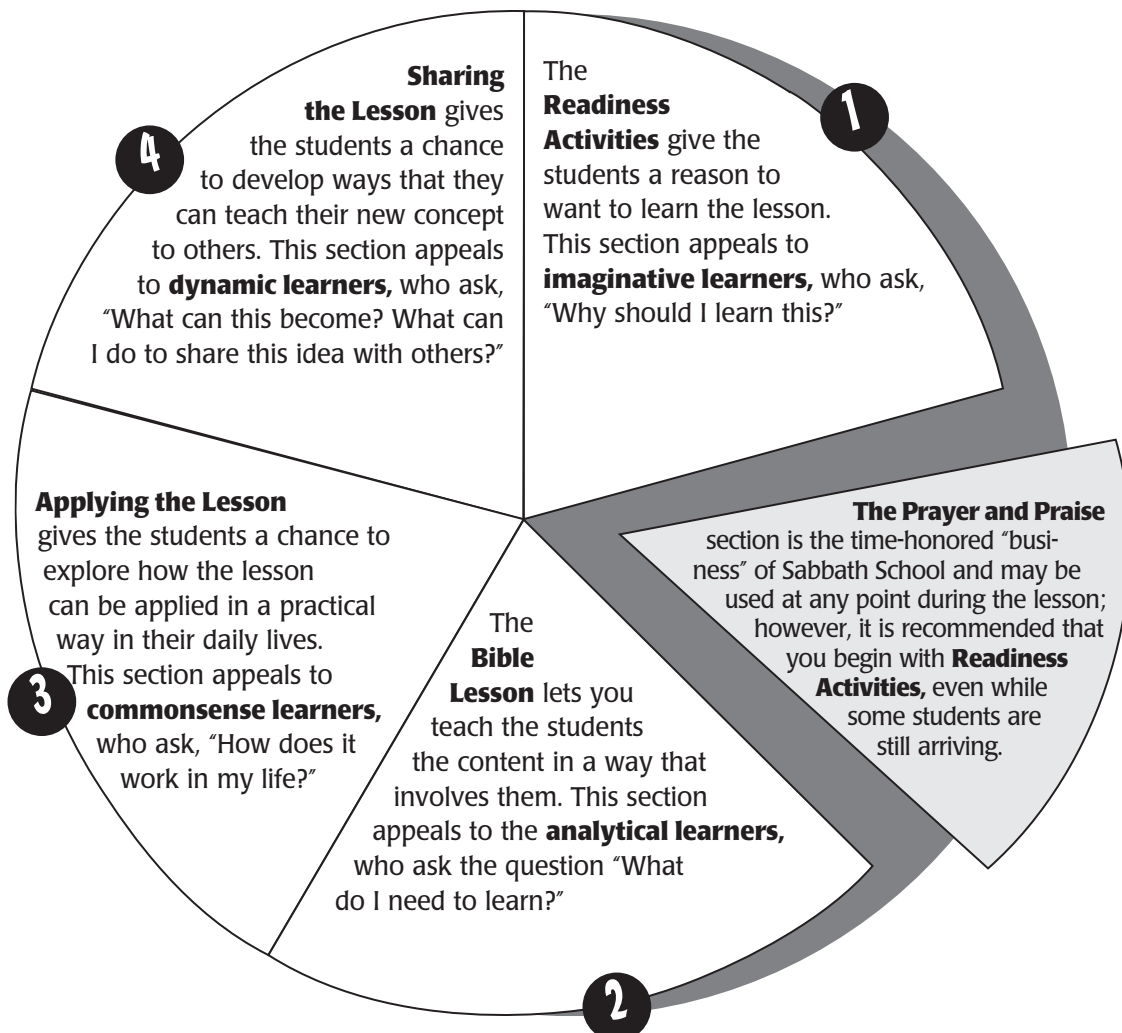
These guides were developed to:

A. Introduce the lesson on Sabbath, inspiring students to study that same lesson throughout the following week.

B. Focus the entire Sabbath School time on one message, one point about God's grace, the response of worship we make to that grace, or how that grace empowers our loving relationships with one another and our service to a world God's love created and sustains.

C. Give students active learning experiences so that they can more readily internalize the truths being presented. These experiences are followed by debriefing sessions in which you ask questions that lead the students to reflect on what they experience, interpret the experience, and apply that information to their lives.

D. Reach each student in the way he or she learns best. By following the natural learning sequence on which these outlines were based, you will also connect students with the message for the week in a way that will capture each one's attention and imagination.



To use this guide . . .

Try to follow the natural learning sequence outlines, but adapt activities as necessary to make the program work in your particular situation.

Look ahead at the Program Overview for each week so you can be prepared with the simple materials suggested.

Always have available regularly used supplies such as:

- aluminum foil
- art supplies (glue sticks, fabric glue, glitter sticks, craft sticks, etc.)
- bags (paper, plastic, sealable plastic; large and small)
- balloons
- baskets, bowls, jars for collecting offering
- beanbags
- Bibles
- blindfolds
- boxes, large and small
- chalkboard or whiteboard
- costumes (Bible-times: robes, head dress, sandals, rope or heavy yarn, large T-shirts)
- cotton balls or fiberfill
- cups (disposable, paper/plastic/Styrofoam)
- device to play music (MP3, CD, streaming, etc.)
- electrical extension cord
- flashlight
- gifts (small, inexpensive)
- hole punch
- index cards
- Jesus stickers and pictures
- magazines and catalogs (old—for cutting)
- magnets
- nature specimens
- paper clips (steel)
- paper plates, large and small
- papers, large and small (newsprint, rolls of brown paper, poster board, construction paper [various colors, lined and unlined])
- pencils, pens, markers, crayons, colored pencils, chalk
- ribbon
- rhythm instruments
- rubber bands
- scissors
- self-stick notes (Post-it® notes)
- stapler and staples
- stickers
- string
- tape (masking, cellophane, double-stick)
- yarn (several colors)

Additional Supplies Required for This Quarter

Lesson 1

- map for each child (see p. 150) or large map
- tour signs
- four pop-up tents or tents made from overturned tables; sheets, blankets
- signs for outside and inside each tent
- offering device decorated with hands glued on each side of the container to represent service
- adults to represent Priscilla and Aquila
- pillows, sleeping bag, bottle of water (optional)
- large triangle patterns (see p. 13)
- copy of form (see p. 151) for each child
- basket of home items (flowers, candles, music, soap, towels, house key, etc.)
- letter to parents
- pattern for doorknob hanger (see p. 17)

Lesson 2

- banner
- leaf cutouts (see p. 27)
- large, leafless tree or large tree picture
- stamped envelope
- watercolor paint
- cutouts made from sponges
- heavy string
- clothespins
- letter to parents

Lesson 3

- rope
- sign stating "Please wait to be seated."
- large button-up shirt
- mittens
- shoes with shoestrings
- small cutouts of people
- small sheet of paper with activity list for each child
- small towel or washcloth for each child
- paper napkin for each child
- pretty serving tray
- balloons (inflated and uninflated)

Lesson 4

- letters prepared in advance for each child
- mailbox
- pitcher of water
- glitter glue
- prison backdrop
- picture of your pastor (if available)
- envelope for each child
- large, leafless tree or large tree picture
- fruit cutouts in basket (see p. 37)

- banner
- dowel rod
- one yard (1 m.) of light-colored cloth
- fabric paint

Lesson 5

- angel shapes (see p. 57)
- eraser clearly marked with the word "Jesus"
- piece of pottery with a sign reading "Send me!"
- red cellophane
- fan
- classical religious music
- black construction paper or blackened rocks
- rocks or black rock-shaped cutouts
- tongs
- white cloth
- food coloring
- bleach in container

Lesson 6

- sun cutouts (see p. 67)
- stapler or pins
- fingerpaints in the seven colors of the rainbow
- baby wipes or wet paper towels
- piece of pottery from last week with a rainbow-colored sign reading "God keeps His promises."
- spotlight
- "bed" (see activity, p. 64)
- crown
- large rainbow drawing divided into seven colors
- plastic soap dishes/small boxes for each child (optional)
- Bible references list (see activity, p. 65)

Lesson 7

- salt dough (see activity, p. 72)
- large piece of waxed paper
- rolling pins
- yellow and green finger paints
- baby wipes or wet paper towels
- modeling clay
- plastic place mats or waxed paper
- piece of pottery with a sign reading "Mold me, Lord!"

- several pieces of clay pottery (including plate or cup)
- picture of potter's wheel (if possible a real potter's wheel; small ones available in most large craft stores)
- clump of pottery clay
- modeling clay or salt dough
- plastic soap dishes/small boxes for each child (optional)
- hard, dry clay
- clay or salt dough object for each child (see Applying the Lesson, p. 76)

Lesson 8

- two serving trays
- blue, indigo, or violet finger paints
- baby wipes or wet paper towels
- piece of pottery with a sign reading "God gives too."
- paper brick-shaped cutouts
- fancy cup and tray
- imitation swords, spears, bows, and arrows
- modeling clay
- plastic place mats or waxed paper
- balloons
- flour
- funnel

Lesson 9

- clipping of a weather forecast
- labels
- miscellaneous items to put in two boxes (see Activity, p. 95)
- piece of pottery with a sign reading "God is faithful"
- pictures of Baby Jesus, Jesus on cross, Jesus' second coming
- picture of Daniel 2 image (see p. 97)

Lesson 10

- energetic male guest
- praise music (optional)
- slips of paper with written verses
- container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!"
- "temple" corner (candlestick, curtain, etc.)
- priestly robe
- copy of the memory verse for each child
- angel stick or shape (see p. 106)
- newspaper

Lesson 11

- baby pictures (optional)
- angel robe
- container decorated with musical notes and the

words "Praise Him!"

- padding to simulate pregnancy (optional)
- three helpers
- angel bookmarks (see p. 152)

Lesson 12

- large poster board angel
- optional angels (see p. 153)
- ceiling hook
- nylon thread
- silver or gold material
- gold rickrack (optional)
- Luke 2:10, 12 on paper
- sheep (toy stuffed, papier maché, or drawn on poster board and cut out)
- shepherds' rods
- spotlight
- wire coat hangers
- angel pattern (see p. 153)
- small wooden beads or lumps of clay
- pipe cleaners or wire
- black thread
- small paintbrushes
- teaspoon
- water
- salt
- access to an oven

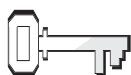
Lesson 13

- manger cutout for each child (see p. 154)
- stable scene
- swaddling cloths for Baby Jesus
- slips of paper
- parents with a newborn (if possible) or a male baby doll
- sheep (toy stuffed, papier maché, or drawn on poster board and cut out)
- memory verse written on small piece of paper
- pieces of cardboard or soft wood
- hay or straw
- photocopies of line drawings of cows, horses, donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, angels (see p. 147)

Lesson 14

- small denomination coins
- number spinners
- small prizes
- 2" x 5" (5 cm X 12 cm) slips of paper
- mixing bowl(s)
- dry rice, beans, pasta, etc.

Lesson	Bible Story	References	Memory Verse	Message	Materials
SERVICE: We begin serving at home.					
Lesson 1 Oct. 1	Priscilla and Aquila help Paul.	Acts 18; AA 243-254, 269, 270	Romans 12:13	I serve God when I am kind to those invited to my home..	See p. 11
Lesson 2 Oct. 8	Titus visits Corinth for Paul.	2 Cor. 2:12, 13; 8:16-24; 9:1-8; Romans 15:26; AA 301, 323, 324	John 20:21	I serve God when I willingly help others.	See p. 21
Lesson 3 Oct. 15	Onesimus returns to Philemon.	Philemon; AA 456-460	Ephesians 6:7	I can serve Jesus at home.	See p. 31
Lesson 4 Oct. 22	Paul writes to Timothy.	2 Timothy; AA 498-508	Hebrews 6:10	When we help people who serve God, we serve God too.	See p. 41
GRACE: God keeps His promises.					
Lesson 5 Oct. 29	God's temple.	Isaiah 6; PK 303-310	Isaiah 6:7	Because of God's grace, my sins are forgiven when I ask Him.	See p. 51
Lesson 6 Nov. 5	God heals Hezekiah.	Isaiah 38:1-21; PK 340-348	Isaiah 38:7	God keeps His promises.	See p. 61
Lesson 7 Nov. 12	Jeremiah visits a potter.	Jeremiah 18:1-6; MH 471, 472	Isaiah 64:8	God holds me in His hands and molds me.	See p. 71
Lesson 8 Nov. 19	Nehemiah rebuilds walls of Jerusalem.	Nehemiah 1-4, 6; PK 628-645, 653-660	Nehemiah 2:8	God gives me the grace and power to do His will.	See p. 81
Lesson 9 Nov. 26	New Testament fulfills Old Testament prophecies.	Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:1; Isaiah 53; Mark 15: 22- 39; Acts 1:9-11; DA 231-242, 469, 470, 627, 628, 830, 831	Joshua 23:14	I know God keeps His promises, because Bible prophecies come true.	See p. 91
WORSHIP: Worshiping is sharing our love for Jesus.					
Lesson 10 Dec. 3	Zechariah is told he will be the father of John.	Luke 1:5-23, 57-80; DA 97-100	Luke 1:68	I worship God when I tell others about His goodness and love.	See p. 101
Lesson 11 Dec. 10	Mary sings after Gabriel's visit.	Luke 1:26-56; DA 81, 82; 5BC 1128	Luke 1:46, 47	I worship God when I tell others about my love for Him.	See p. 111
Lesson 12 Dec. 17	Angels sing good news to shepherds.	Luke 2:1-14; DA 43-48	Luke 2:14, (KJV)	I worship God when I listen to the good news about Jesus.	See p. 121
Lesson 13 Dec. 24	Shepherds spread the good news.	Luke 2:15-20; DA 47, 48	Luke 2:17	I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.	See p. 131
WORSHIP: We worship God every day.					
Lesson 14 Dec. 31	Offerings to build tabernacle.	Exodus 35:4-36:7; PP 343-349	Psalms 54:6	I worship God with my offerings	See p. 141



References

Acts 18; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 243-254, 269, 270



Memory Verse

"Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Romans 12:13, NIV).

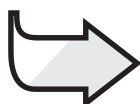


Objectives

The children will:
Know that one way Christians serve God is to fellowship with others.

Feel a desire to be hospitable.

Respond by getting their parents' permission to invite someone home for family fellowship in the near future.



The Message

I serve God when I am kind to those invited to my home

Come to Our House!

Monthly Theme

We begin serving at home.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Priscilla and Aquila were tentmakers who had to leave Rome when the emperor ordered all the Jews to leave. They moved to Corinth, where they opened their home to Paul and studied the gospel with him. Paul stayed there and worked with them as a tentmaker for one and a half years while he taught the Corinthians about Christ. Sometimes Priscilla and Aquila traveled to other places to share the gospel as they made tents. While in Ephesus they opened their home to Apollos, another person who was teaching about Jesus.

This is a lesson about service.

Hospitality clearly demonstrates Christ's love and caring to those who are welcomed—and helps break down barriers to the gospel.

Teacher Enrichment

"Hospitality. Gr. *philoxenia*, literally, 'love of strangers. . . .' Hospitality was early regarded as one of the important Christian virtues (see 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8; Heb. 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9). This was necessarily so in view of the large number of traveling and persecuted believers. Many Christians were driven from their homes and cities and compelled to seek shelter with those who held the same faith as themselves (see Acts 8:1; 26:11). The hospitality which believers practiced toward one another contributed much to the bond that held together the widely scattered members of the early Christian church" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 6, p. 622).

Room Decorations

Put up felts or pictures depicting Onesimus and Paul; Priscilla, Aquila, and Paul; Timothy and Paul; and Titus and Paul. Label each scene. Put a caption over the group of felts or pictures that says, "WE CAN SERVE TOO."

If available, put up a tent somewhere in the classroom to draw attention to the fact that Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla were tentmakers.

Display a map showing Paul's missionary journeys. Measure distances between places Paul visited. Use the map to locate places as you teach Lessons 1 through 4.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	two Bible-times costumes, map for each child (see p. 150) or large map, tour signs (see activity, p.12)
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Traveling With Paul</i> B. <i>Mat Weaving</i>	Bibles, four pop-up tents or tents made from overturned tables; sheets, blankets; signs for outside and inside each tent Bibles, 1/2" x 8" (1 cm. x 20 cm.) and 1/2" x 4" (1 cm. x 10 cm.) strips of multicolored paper prepared in advance, glue, finished sample of mat
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering device decorated with hands glued on each side of the container white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	tent(s) see Welcome and Readiness A, Bible-times costumes, adults to represent Priscilla and Aquila, (optional: pillows, sleeping bag, bottle of water) triangle patterns (see p. 13), pencils, scissors, stapler or glue, copy of memory verse posted for all to see Bibles, copy of form on p. 151 for each child, pencils
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Please Feel at Home</i>	basket of home items (such as flowers, candles, music, soap, towels, a house key, etc.) , chalk/whiteboard, markers/chalk
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Hospitality Plans</i>	letter to parents containing info about parents' potluck; pens, pencils, markers; paper; scissors; pattern for doorknob hanger (see p. 17)

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

You Need: (for Welcome)

- two Bible-times costumes
- map for each child (see p. 150) or large map
- tour signs

Welcome

If you choose to do Readiness A, prepare in advance one of the following signs: “New Testament Tours” or “Paul’s Missionary Tours.”

Dressed in a Bible-times costume, greet the children with “Welcome to Asia Minor. Have a safe journey.” Have another person, dressed as Paul, for “Experiencing the Story.”

As the children arrive, hand them individual maps (see p. 150) or point to the large map you have posted, which includes the cities of Athens, Berea, Corinth, and Ephesus. Ask them to have a seat and wait for the tour, which will be announced soon.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- four pop-up tents or tents made from overturned tables, sheets, blankets
- signs for outside and inside each tent (see activity)

A. Traveling With Paul

Prepare in advance four pop-up tents or tents made from tables, sheets, etc. Put the following signs outside and inside the tents:

Outside

Inside

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 1. Berea | The Bereans had a very noble character. Paul said that they studied the Scriptures every day to make sure that Paul was telling the truth. They loved to study God’s Word. |
| 2. Athens | This city was full of idols. The Athenians even worshipped something called the “UNKNOWN GOD.” They only wanted to talk about all the latest ideas. Most people made fun of Jesus’ resurrection. |
| 3. Corinth | In Corinth the Jews were so mean to Paul that he said, “From now on I will go to the Gentiles.” God gave Paul a vision telling him that no one would attack him while he was there. He met some tentmakers, Priscilla and Aquila. Paul preached here for one and a half years. |
| 4. Ephesus | Ephesus was the most important trade city in Asia Minor. Paul made Ephesus a center for telling people about Jesus. Because of what Paul said, the people there made a bonfire and burned all their books about evil and magic. |

Say: **To prepare for our Bible lesson today, we will take a tour with a famous world traveler named Paul. He traveled all around telling people about Jesus. We will stop at some of the places he visited.** If they didn’t receive one upon arrival, give each child a map with the names of the above cities. “Paul” leads the children from tent to tent. After reading the city name on the outside, the children crawl into the tent. “Paul” reads (or has someone read) the sign inside. If there is a large attendance in Sabbath School, divide into groups and have adult helpers go to different tents with the groups.

As the children visit each “city,” ask them to put a check beside it on their map.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy your tour?** (yes, sort of, etc.) **Our lesson today is about Paul’s missionary trip to some of the cities we “visited” on our tour. In the city of Corinth he met a friendly husband and wife who invited him home. Let’s find and read Romans 12:13. Read aloud. Paul’s new friends followed the advice of this text and our message. Today’s message is:**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I AM KIND TO THOSE INVITED TO MY HOME.

Say that with me.

B. Mat Weaving

The children will weave the strips in and out to make a mat. Glue the ends when finished. Provide a finished example for them to use as a guide.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you think this would be a comfortable bed?** (yes, no) **Would you rather sleep on a big mat or your bed at home?** (Accept answers.) **Paul traveled all over Asia Minor and probably slept on a mat many nights. The times others asked him to stay with them must have been a great blessing. God used the hospitality of others to bless Paul. Let's read Romans 12:13. Read aloud together. Today's lesson is about people who obeyed this command. Today's message is:**

You Need:

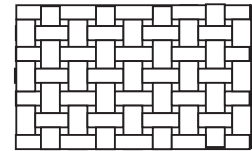
- Bibles
- 1/2" x 8" (1 cm. x 20 cm.) and 1/2" x 4" (1 cm. x 10 cm.) strips of multicolored paper
- glue
- finished sample of mat



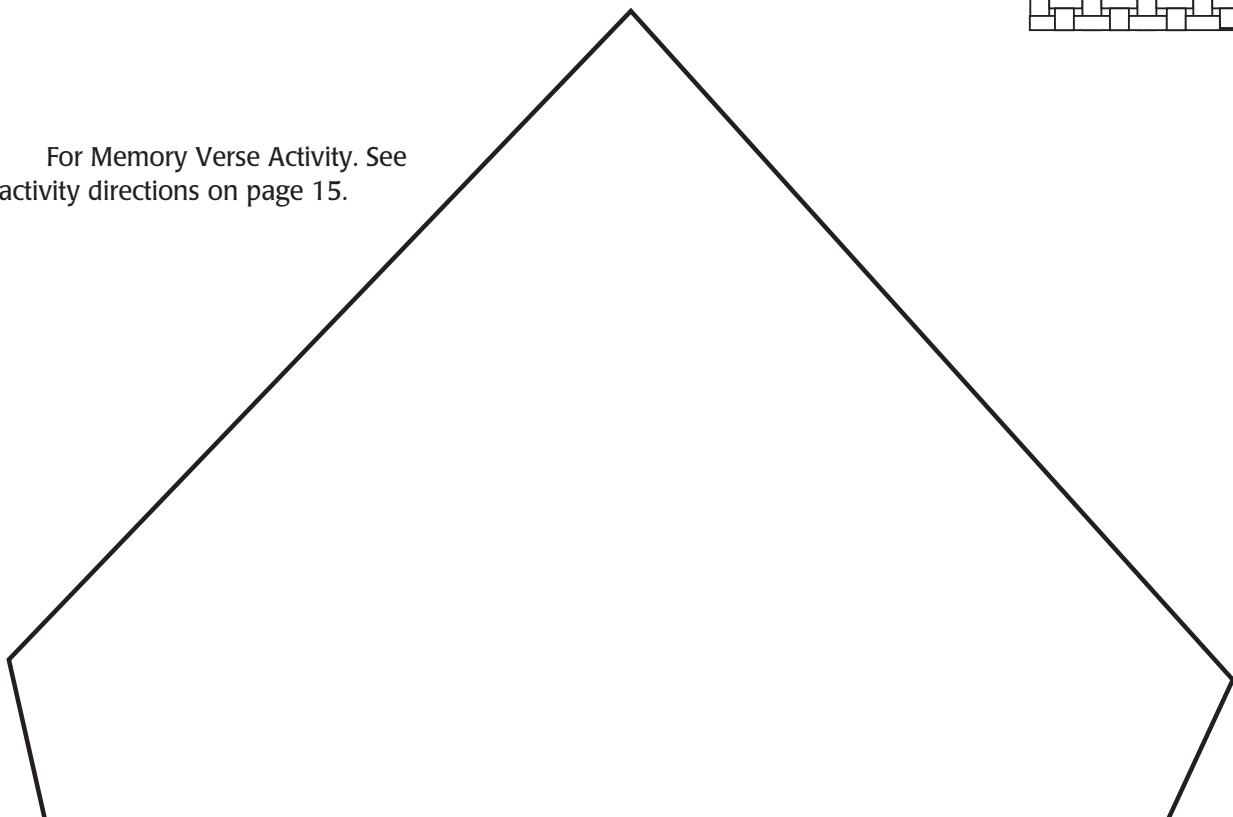
I SERVE GOD WHEN I AM KIND TO THOSE INVITED TO MY HOME.

Say that with me.

Note: Prayer and Praise appears on page 16.



For Memory Verse Activity. See activity directions on page 15.



Bible Lesson

You Need:

- tent(s) (see Welcome and Readiness A)
- two adult Bible-times costumes
- adults to represent Priscilla and Aquila (optional: pillows, sleeping bag, bottle of water)

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Priscilla, Aquila

Props: tents, Bible-times costumes for Priscilla and Aquila (optional: pillows, sleeping bag, bottle of water)

As Priscilla and Aquila tell the lesson story, the class can sit in the tent(s). If children are in more than one tent, be sure they sit so they can see Priscilla and Aquila, and proceed as follows:

Aquila: Hello, everyone! I'm Aquila, and this is my wife, Priscilla. Do any of you have the same name as one of us? *(Wait for response.)*

Priscilla: We heard that you know Paul, a good friend of ours.

Aquila: We first met him just after we moved to Corinth. *(Points to Corinth on the map of Paul's journeys displayed in the room.)* He had come to share Jesus with the people there.

Priscilla: I could see that Paul needed a place to stay, so we invited him to come home with us.

Aquila: Like I said, we had just moved to Corinth because the Roman emperor had made all Jews leave Rome—I am Jewish. Our home wasn't fancy. But we invited Paul anyway.

Priscilla: We soon found out that Aquila, Paul, and I had more in common than just being in Corinth. Paul is a tent-maker, just as Aquila and I are.

Aquila: We like inviting people into our home. We enjoy visiting with them. Having Paul around was extra-special. He helped us make tents, and he helped us learn more about Jesus.

Priscilla: We were learning so much

from Paul, but we were also busy sharing the good news about Jesus with others, just as Paul had shared with us.

Aquila: Then one day it was time to move again, to tell other people in other places about Jesus. Priscilla, Paul, and I sailed to Ephesus. Paul continued his travels, but Priscilla and I set up our home there. *(Point to Ephesus on the wall map.)*

Priscilla: When we went to the Jewish synagogue (another name for church) in Ephesus, we heard a very good preacher named Apollos. He was an educated man and knew the Scriptures well. He had learned a little bit about Jesus and was sharing the little he knew in the synagogue and with everyone he met.

Aquila: We invited Apollos to our home, fed him, and made him comfortable. We shared with him what we had learned from Paul about Jesus.

Priscilla: We enjoyed sharing Jesus with everyone we met. The only reason we made tents was to earn money to buy our food and other necessities. God always led us to people who were ready to learn about Jesus.

Teacher: Priscilla and Aquila, we are glad that you could visit our class today. Thank you for coming.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you enjoy having guests in your home?** (yes, sometimes, etc.) **How do you feel when someone invites you to their home for a meal or to stay overnight?** (I appreciate it; I feel good about that, etc.)

How do you think Paul felt when Priscilla and Aquila invited him to stay with them? (thankful, pleased, etc.)

In what ways did Priscilla and

Aquila serve Jesus? (They invited people into their home; they told people about Jesus.)

Can you help your family make guests feel comfortable when they come to your home? Let's say our message together.



**I SERVE GOD WHEN I AM
KIND TO THOSE INVITED TO
MY HOME.**

Memory Verse

Prepare in advance several large triangle patterns to represent a tent. The children will trace around the triangle, cut out two, staple/glue them at the top, and write the memory verse on the inside of the "tent." Have a completed memory verse tent for the children to see, with the verse already written inside.

Practice closing the tent and saying the verse from memory. Repeat until the children know the verse.

You Need:

- large triangle patterns (see p. 13)
- pencils
- scissors
- stapler or glue
- copy of memory verse posted for all to see

Bible Study

Give each child a copy of the "Who Had Open House?" form (see p. 141).

Have the children find the texts and write who opened their home for whom. Help them as needed. Correct responses are noted below.

Text	Who opened their home	Person(s) visiting
Genesis 19:1, 2	Lot	Two angels
2 Kings 4:8	Shunammite woman	Elisha
Luke 10:38	Martha	Jesus and His disciples
Acts 16:13-15	Lydia	Paul and his companions
Acts 18:1-3	Aquila and Priscilla	Paul
Acts 18:24-26	Aquila and Priscilla	Apollos

You Need:

- Bibles
- copy of form on p. 151 for each child
- pencils

Debriefing

Say: **All these people, and many others, knew how to serve God by opening their homes to visitors. Your family and you can do it too. You receive a blessing when you share your home with others.* Why do you think that is?** (Allow for responses.) **Always remember:**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I AM KIND TO THOSE INVITED TO MY HOME.

Say that with me.

**Remind children that they should never invite others to their home without their parents' permission and that they should never entertain others in their homes when their parents aren't there.*

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129)

"Love at Home" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 137)

"This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106)

"The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **Where did the characters in today's story serve Jesus? At home? At church? In their city?**



Offering

Say: **This month our Sabbath School will be about service at home and in all the world. Save your money at home and bring it to Sabbath School to serve people in other parts of our world.**

You Need:

- offering device decorated with illustrations of hands on each side



Prayer

Ask: **How many of you have had guests in your home for a meal or who have stayed with you for a while? Can you remember some of their names?** (List names on board.) **Let's pray that God will bless and help these people whom your family has invited into your homes.** Kneel and have the children who mentioned their guests pray for them. Have someone close the prayer time by asking God to help everyone in the class to practice hospitality.

You Need:

- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk

3

Applying the Lesson

Please Feel at Home

Prepare in advance a basket of items, such as those listed, that represent ways to make others comfortable in our homes. Talk about each one and ask the children for their suggestions on how to make their guests feel at home. List their specific suggestions where all can see.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Can you share any pleasant experiences that you have had when guests were staying in your home? How did you help take care of the guests? Did you share your own room?**

What will you try to remember when someone you meet needs a meal or a place to stay? Let's answer with today's message:

You Need:

- basket of home items (flowers, candles, music, soap, towels, house key, etc.)
- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk



**I SERVE GOD WHEN I AM
KIND TO THOSE INVITED TO
MY HOME.**

4

Sharing the Lesson

Hospitality Plans

Depending on the circumstances of your students, do one or both of the following activities:

1. Make plans to invite the parents to a potluck to be held on an upcoming Sabbath. Let the children help plan the menu, location, etc. The children will serve their families at the potluck. You will need to send a letter home so parents are aware of the plans and the reason for this time together.

2. Provide a pattern (see illustration) for a doorknob hanger with the message "Welcome to Our Home." Let the children each make one to remind them to open their home to others. Have them think of someone they can invite to their home in the near future.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you like planning to serve your parents with a meal?** (Liked it; this will be fun; don't like it, etc.)

Whom will you invite to your home in the near future? (Allow for responses.)

How will you help with the preparation, and what will you do once the guests arrive? (Help prepare the food; wait on the guests at mealtime; take their coats when they arrive, etc.) **Let's say today's message together:**

You Need:

- letter to parents about parents' potluck
- pens/pencils/markers
- paper
- scissors
- pattern for doorknob hanger



**I SERVE GOD WHEN I AM
KIND TO THOSE INVITED TO
MY HOME.**

Closing

Pray that our homes will be a place filled with God's Spirit, where guests will feel welcome and receive a blessing.

Remind the children to use their Bible study guide and do the daily activities.



**Welcome to
Our Home**

Come to Our House!

References

Acts 18; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 243-254, 269, 270

Memory Verse

“Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality” (Romans 12:13, NIV).

The Message

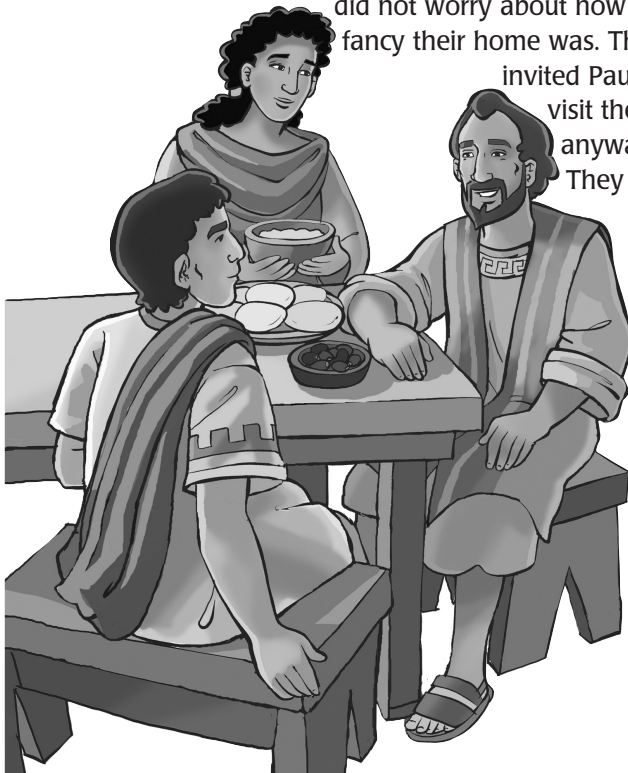
I serve God when I am kind to those invited to my home.

Think about the last time you had visitors in your home. What did you do to get ready? What did you do to make them comfortable?

The Bible has many stories about people who invited guests to their home. Meet Priscilla and Aquila.

Paul, God’s helper, wanted to tell the world about Jesus. So he took a very long trip—known today as “Paul’s Second Missionary Journey.” He had arrived in the city of Corinth to share Jesus with the people there. A lot of people lived and worked in Corinth, an important city. Paul wasn’t sure where he would stay, or what he would do. Then he met Priscilla and Aquila.

The Roman emperor had ordered all Jews to leave Rome, and Aquila was a Jew. Having just recently moved to Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla probably were not finished settling in. But they did not worry about how fancy their home was. They invited Paul to visit them anyway. They soon



found out that they had more in common than being Jewish in Corinth. They were tentmakers, and so was Paul.

Priscilla and Aquila were very hospitable. That means that they liked to invite people home, they liked to make others feel comfortable, and visit with them. But they didn’t just invite Paul to Sabbath dinner; they invited him to live with them! Paul helped them make tents. And he helped them learn more about Jesus. Paul lived and worked with Aquila and Priscilla for about a year and a half.

Priscilla and Aquila learned much about Jesus from Paul. They also kept busy sharing the good news about Jesus, just as Paul had shared with them.

Then one day it was time to move again, to tell other people in other places about Jesus. All three of them sailed to Ephesus. Paul continued his travels, but Priscilla and Aquila set up their new home in Ephesus.

Apollos, another Jew, had moved to Ephesus about the same time. An educated man, he knew the Scriptures well. He had learned a little bit about Jesus and was sharing what he knew with everyone he met. He even preached about Jesus in the Jewish synagogue! That was where Priscilla and Aquila heard him. And just as with Paul in Corinth, they invited him home with them. They fed him, made him comfortable, and talked with him about Jesus.

Priscilla and Aquila shared Jesus with everyone they met. They made and sold tents so they could buy food and other things they needed. They were good businesspeople. But most of all, Priscilla and Aquila are remembered for their hospitality. They served Jesus and those around them by inviting people to their home. They showed others God’s love in a very real, everyday way.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, look for creatures that “invite” other creatures to their homes. Are they hospitable?
- Look at pictures of a spiderweb. Glue white thread or string onto black paper in a web design. Or just use the glue itself to create a design.
- Find a quiet place and read your lesson story together; then read and discuss Romans 12:13.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss Acts 18:1-8.
- Look at the spiderweb art you created yesterday. Why do you think spiders “invite” other creatures to their home? Why does your family invite people home? How can you be like Priscilla and Aquila?
- Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla were _____ (verse 3). Open your tent from Sabbath School and read the memory verse. (Or draw a tent and write the verse on it.)

Monday

- Read and discuss Acts 18:9-17 with your family. Why was it good that Paul stayed in a loving home while in Corinth? How long did he stay there? _____ How many months is that? _____
- Talk to your parents about whom you might invite to your house and what you can do to make them comfortable.
- Look in your memory verse tent; then say the verse from memory.

Tuesday

- With your family, read and discuss Acts 18:18-21.
- Make a diagram of the rooms in your house. Draw where the furniture is placed. Write the

names of each room. Where do your guests stay? Write “For Guests” on that space.

- How do you think Aquila’s and Priscilla’s home was different from yours? Learn something about people who live in tents today.

Wednesday

- For family worship, read and discuss Acts 18:22, 23.
- Ask a family member to show you a map of “Paul’s Second Missionary Journey” (in the back pages of a Bible). Find Corinth, Ephesus, and Antioch.
- Say the memory verse without help.
- Ask if you may make a sandwich for lunch. Cut it in quarters diagonally to make triangles. Stand them close together on their base, and you have a made a sandwich tent.

Thursday

- Read and discuss Acts 18:24-28 during family worship. Say your memory verse together.
- Ask a family member to help you find and read about the word “hospitality” in a dictionary. What does it mean? How did Aquila and Priscilla show hospitality?
- Talk about how to make your home a happy place for guests to visit. Then sing “Love at Home” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 137) before prayer.

Friday

- For family worship, make a tent with a blanket or sheet draped over furniture. Invite your family to sit in your tent. Read Acts 18:1-4, then continue to tell your Bible lesson in your own words. Say your memory verse together.
- Thank God for your home and family. Pray that your home will be a blessing to others. Share with your family what you think about helping others.

LESSON TWO



References

2 Corinthians 2:12, 13;
8:16-24; 9:1-8; Romans
15:26; *The Acts of the
Apostles*, pp. 301, 323, 324



Memory Verse

"As the Father has
sent me, I am sending
you" (John 20:21. NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that all who
serve God willingly
help others.

Feel concern for those in
spiritual and physical need.

Respond with enthusiasm
to requests for service and
for funds to help others.



The Message

I serve God when I
willingly help others.

Messenger on a Mission

Monthly Theme

We begin serving at home.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Paul is concerned about the church in Corinth, so he writes a letter (1 Corinthians) and then sends Titus to prepare the way for him to visit (*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 301). Titus and Paul are to meet in Troas. Paul is perplexed when Titus doesn't appear, but he continues his journey to Macedonia and meets Titus there. He learns that Titus' mission to Corinth was successful, so he sends him back with another letter (2 Corinthians).

This is a lesson about service.

Titus shared Paul's concern for the Corinthians and carried Paul's messages to them with enthusiasm. God asks us today to do the same—to share His concern for others and enthusiastically carry His message of love to them, helping them all we can.

Teacher Enrichment

Titus was a close friend and traveling companion of Paul's and was one of his converts. Paul refers to him as his "own son after the common faith" (Titus 1:4, KJV). Titus was a Gentile, and Paul refused to circumcise him just to please the Jews in Jerusalem. Titus was probably a native of Antioch. He was Paul's ambassador when some in the Corinthian church turned against Paul, and he effected reconciliation.

Also, Titus was to supervise a collection for the poor at Jerusalem. The last we hear of Titus is shortly before Paul's death when Paul sent him off on a mission to Dalmatia. (See *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, p. 1128.)

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Service Tree</i> B. <i>About Stamps</i>	Bible, banner, markers, leaf cutouts (seep. 27), large branch or small leafless tree or large tree picture, means of connecting leaves to tree Bible; stamped envelope; for each child: cutouts made from sponge; paper; watercolor paint
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container used last week, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bibles Bibles, two 8-foot (2.4-meter) lengths of heavy string, index cards, clothes-pins Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Guest Church Worker</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Collection</i>	Bibles, letter to parents

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- banner
- markers
- leaf cutouts (see p. 27)
- large branch or small leafless tree
- or
- large tree picture
- means of connecting leaves to tree

A. Service Tree

In advance, prepare banner, leaf cutouts (see p. 27), and tree. The tree may be a large branch or leafless tree that is free standing, or you may draw/create the tree as a bulletin board or wall decoration. Make a banner that reads "Service Tree."

As the children arrive, give each a leaf cutout. On one side of the leaf they are to write their names; on the other side, one thing they can do to serve (example: set the table, feed the pets, obey, help my neighbor rake his yard, help my teacher at church, etc.). The leaves should be attached to the tree with paper clips, wire, string, tape, or glue.

Note: This tree will also be used in Lesson 4.

Debriefing

Ask: **Was it hard or easy to think of a way to serve?** (Accept answers.) **How do you feel when you help others?** (At first, I don't want to take the time, but am glad I did it, etc.) **Has anyone served you today?** (Mom, Dad made breakfast, etc.) **Have you served anyone today? We'll be learning more about the way other people served in our story today. Let's find and read John 20:21.** Read aloud together. **Since Jesus has sent us to help others, how should we do it? Today's message gives us an answer:**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I WILLINGLY HELP OTHERS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- stamped envelope
- for each child: cutouts made from sponge
- paper
- watercolor paint

B. About Stamps

Show a stamped letter-size envelope. Ask: **How many of you have ever received a letter in the mail? How many have mailed a letter to someone? What do you need when you mail a letter?** (address, stamp) **How much does it cost to mail a letter?**

Say: **There are other kinds of stamps. You can't use them to mail a letter, but you can use them to decorate the envelope or a card.**

Say: **We are going to make stamps. Some stamps are little rectangle shapes that you stick onto a letter. Some stamps are shapes that you dip in paint or ink and dab on paper.** Demonstrate the following:

Dip the sponge shape into watercolor paint and dab it again and again on paper. Distribute supplies and have the children use the sponge pieces to decorate the paper.

Debriefing

Have children show their stamp creations. Say: **Paul wrote many letters. Do you think Paul had to use stamps when he sent his letters?** (don't know, yes, no) **Actually, most of his letters were delivered by messengers. His messengers willingly served him, and by doing so, they served God too. Let's find and read John 20:21. Read aloud together. Perhaps we will be asked to deliver a special message someday. Whatever God calls us to do, let's remember:**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I WILLINGLY HELP OTHERS.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129)

"This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106)

"I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124)

"The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **Are you willing to be a missionary right where you are, and willingly help others?**



Offering

Say: **Our Bible lesson today tells about an offering that was collected for those who needed help. We will also take an offering to help those who need it.**

You Need:

- offering device used last week



Prayer

Following Paul's example of concern for new converts, during prayer time today list and pray for newly baptized members in your church. Pray that they will keep the faith that they have accepted.

You Need:

- white/chalkboard
- markers/chalk

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bibles

Experiencing the Story

The children will act out the story as you tell it, using their own actions. Designate which children will be: Paul, Titus, sailors, Corinthians. Make sure you tell the story slowly, pausing at certain times so children may do all the actions.

Read or tell the story.

Sailors with heavy bundles on their shoulders tramped down the gangplank to the docks at the seaport town of Troas. *[Pause.]* Paul pushed his way through the jostling crowd, asking where the ship was from. *[Pause.]*

Perhaps he stopped one of the sailors. "Have you come from Macedonia?" he may have asked. *[Pause.]* When he found out that the newly arrived ship was from Macedonia, he scanned each face for that of his friend, Titus.

Titus was the kind of person who made many friends. He had a very pleasant way that drew people to him.

Paul had written a letter to the people in Corinth about changing their ways. *[Pause.]* The church members there were new Christians. They had never worshipped God before. Many of them were former idol worshippers and criminals. So Paul had sent a letter reminding them that they were not good witnesses for Jesus when they slipped back into their old ways.

Paul had no idea what the Corinthians' response to the letter would be. He was worried that he may have offended them, and yet he cared so much for them. He wanted to visit them if they would let him.

Paul had sent Titus to Corinth to see if his friendship was ruined, or if Titus had

managed to help them see that Paul's criticism was based on love and concern. But Titus wasn't on the ship from Macedonia.

Deeply concerned, Paul decided that he would take the ship to Macedonia himself and find Titus so they could talk. He had to know how the Corinthians had responded to his letter.

In Macedonia, Paul found Titus and asked about his Corinthian friends. *[Pause.]* Were they willing to see him again, or had he permanently ruined their friendship?

"They long to see you!" Titus said joyfully. "Our new Christian friends were concerned about your worry over them, and definitely want to see you again."

Relieved at last, Paul made plans to visit the people in Corinth. He wrote a personal letter to his friends there. *[Pause.]* Titus would take it to them. You can read that letter in the Bible. It's called "Second Corinthians." In it Paul tells the Corinthians that he is glad they are still friends. He tells them of his love and care for their church. He encourages them to cheerfully give a generous contribution to an offering that many churches are collecting for poor people in Jerusalem. Paul says that he hopes the church will show love to Titus and to those traveling with him.

Titus willingly and joyfully served not only Paul but also the people in the churches. Perhaps you have the same gift of getting along with people that Titus had. He and Paul really cared about the people who had joined Jesus' church. That is why Paul wrote letters to them and visited them, to help them stay true to Jesus. Titus and Paul also really cared about those who were still outside the church. That is why they kept traveling to share the good news of Jesus and to help meet people's needs.

Debriefing

Ask: **Would you like to have been Paul's traveling partner? Do you think you would have gotten tired going to so many different places? Why?** (Accept responses.)

Why was Titus such a good helper to Paul and the church? To help you answer that question, let's read 2 Corinthians 8:17. (Titus was enthusiastically and willingly caring for the church.) Say: **Titus's example is a good reminder that:**



**I SERVE GOD WHEN I
WILLINGLY HELP OTHERS.**

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Hang the heavy string in the classroom to form two clotheslines. Write the memory verse and reference on the index cards—one word per card. Make two sets, mixing the order of the cards in each set.

Have the children read the memory verse from the Bible [**"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you"** (John 20:21, NIV)] and then repeat the verse out loud several times.

Divide the class into two groups. Have each group stand facing one of the clotheslines—several feet away. Place a pile of clothespins and one set of index cards in front of each group. When you signal, "Go!" the first child in each line picks up the first card in the pile and hangs it on the clothesline. The next child in each line picks up the next card

You Need:

- Bibles
- two 8-foot (2.4-meters) lengths of heavy string
- index cards
- clothespins

and hangs it in correct relation to the first word. The game continues until the whole verse is hung on each line with the words in the correct order. Optional: Set a timer for an appropriate time and challenge each group to complete the verse before the time is up.

Bible Study

Ahead of time, write where all can see some Bible references about caring or helping.

John 11:32-44
Acts 11:22-30
Acts 20:21-38
Romans 1:6-10
1 Corinthians 9:19-23
1 Timothy 5:4

Have a Bible drill as follows: Pair good readers with nonreaders. After you say, "Hold up Bible," the children hold up their Bibles. Say one of the texts and then "Go!" The children search for the text.

The one who finds it first stands up and reads it. After each passage is read, have the children tell what it says about caring for and helping others (see Debriefing). Adults assist as needed.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you like our "Sword Drill"?** (yes, no) **Let's review the things we learned about caring and helping.** (God cares for the hurt and afflicted; Jesus is our example; Barnabas helped by encouraging; caring causes others to care; we should let others know we care; we can care while witnessing; we should care for one another.) **Let's say our message together again:**



**I SERVE GOD WHEN I
WILLINGLY HELP OTHERS.**

You Need:

- Bible for each child
- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk

3

Applying the Lesson

Guest Church Worker

Arrange in advance for the person who leads personal ministries in your church to come and tell the children what their duties include, and how their duties help people outside the church.

If Ingathering (ADRA Annual Appeal) is done in your part of the world, ask the coordinator to explain about collecting this fund from neighbors in your area, and for what it is used.

Debriefing

Ask: **What would happen if (guest's name) was not doing their job?** (People outside the church might not be reached.)

How can you work with your church to help others? (I can gather food and funds for those in need, give offerings, distribute announcements about community programs, pray for our neighborhood, etc.) **What will be your attitude as you help?** (God will help me to be willing and enthusiastic.) **What does our message say?**



I SERVE GOD WHEN I WILLINGLY HELP OTHERS.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- Bibles
- letter to parents

Collection

Make plans to go as a class some-time soon to collect nonperishable food items with which to make food baskets for those in need.

At this time, distribute a letter to parents explaining the plans to collect food on a certain date. Ask parents to help by donating paper bags and to help with driving and supervision. In the weeks before the distribution, have the children to bring from home some food and toiletry items for the basket. Contact Adventist Community Services or other help agencies for names of people in need or visit a homeless shelter or orphanage. If possible, notify officials that you are coming. If possible, have the children help deliver the food baskets.

(If the above event is not feasible for your Sabbath School, plan an alternate service activity or encourage the children to

help someone in need this coming week.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How is what we are planning to do similar to part of our Bible lesson?** (We will be taking up a collection for those in need, as Paul and Titus did.)

What do you think about our plans to collect things for those in need? Are you willing and enthusiastic?

Whom are you also serving when you help those in need? Let's read Matthew 25:31-40. (King Jesus) Now let's say today's message again:



I SERVE GOD WHEN I WILLINGLY HELP OTHERS.

Closing

Sing "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129). Pray for the success of the food collection and for those who will receive the food.

For Lesson 2. Use with Readiness
Activity A on page 22.



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Messenger on a Mission

References

2 Corinthians 2:12, 13; 8:16-24; 9:1-8; Romans 15:26; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 301, 323, 324

Memory Verse

"As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21, NIV).

The Message

I serve God when I willingly help others.

Have you ever been to an airport? How about a boat harbor? Was it fun to watch all the planes and ships coming and going? In today's story Paul is in a boat harbor. What is he doing there? Perhaps it was like this . . .

Sailors with heavy bundles on their shoulders tramped down the gangplank to the docks at the seaport town of Troas. Paul pushed his way through the jostling crowd, asking where the ship was from.

Perhaps he stopped one of the sailors. "Have you come from Macedonia?" he may have asked. When he found out that the newly arrived ship was from Macedonia, he scanned each face for that of his friend, Titus.

Titus was the kind of person who made many friends. He had a way that drew people to him. If there were disagreements between church members, Titus could help. He helped them see where their differences were and helped resolve them. He was just the kind of person Paul needed right now.

Paul had written a letter to the people in Corinth about changing their ways. The church members there were new Christians. They had never worshipped God before. Many of

them were former idol worshippers and criminals. And Paul had written that they couldn't slip back into those old habits and witness for God at the same time.

So Paul had sent the letter. But he had no idea how the Corinthians had responded. He was worried that he may have offended them. He cared so much for them! He wanted to visit them if they would let him. And that's why he had sent Titus to Corinth to see if his friendship was ruined. Had Titus managed to help them see that Paul's criticism was based on love and concern? But Titus wasn't on the ship from Macedonia.

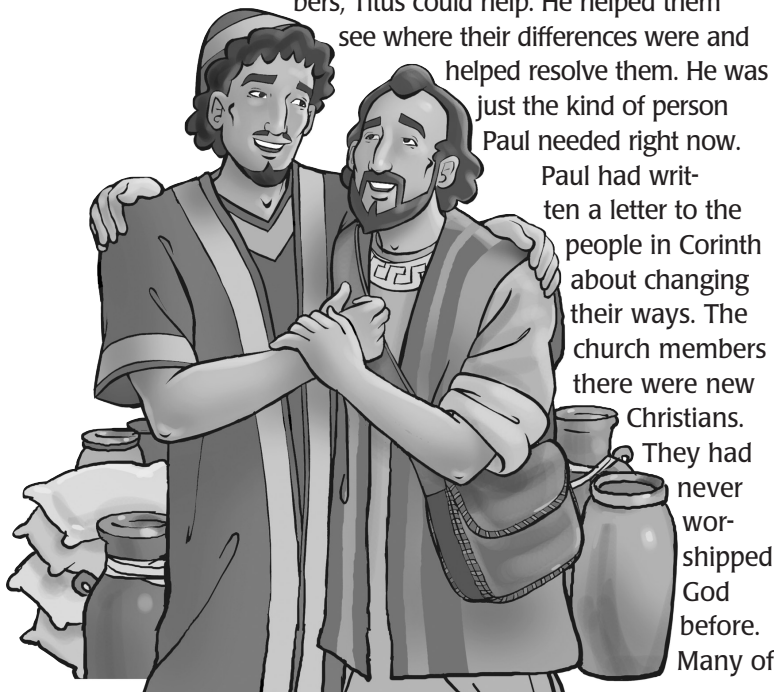
Deeply concerned, Paul decided that he would go to Macedonia himself and find Titus. He had to know how the Corinthians had responded to his letter.

In Macedonia, Paul found Titus and asked about his Corinthian friends. Were they willing to see him again? Or had he permanently ruined their friendship?

"They long to see you again!" Titus said joyfully. "Our new Christian friends were concerned about your worry over them. And they definitely want to see you again."

Relieved at last, Paul made plans to visit Corinth. He wrote a personal letter to his friends there. Titus would take it to them. You can read that letter in the Bible. It's called "Second Corinthians." In it Paul tells the Corinthians that he is glad they are still friends. He tells them of his love and care for them. He encourages them to cheerfully give a generous contribution to an offering that many churches were collecting for the poor in Jerusalem. Paul wrote that he hoped the church would show love to Titus and to those traveling with him.

Titus served not only Paul but also the people in the churches. Perhaps you have the same gift of getting along with people that Titus had. Titus willingly and joyfully served others. He and Paul really cared about the people who had joined Jesus'



church. That is why Paul wrote letters to help them stay true to Jesus. That is why Paul, Titus, and others visited them.

Titus and Paul cared about those who were outside the church too. That is the reason they kept traveling to share the good news of Jesus' love and to help meet people's needs. Can you let others know you genuinely care about them as Paul and Titus did? Will you serve them joyfully and willingly?

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Go for a Sabbath walk with your family, if possible. Collect something to make someone else happy (wildflowers, pretty rocks, shells, etc.). Our Bible lesson mentions a collection to help others.
- Read and discuss John 20:21.
- Sing "This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106) before praying together.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss 2 Corinthians 2:12, 13. Where did Paul go from the seaport of Troas? _____ Look at a Bible map and find it.
- Make celery boats to remind your family of Paul's boat ride. Cut and wash 5-inch (13-centimeter) pieces of celery. Fill them with peanut butter. Cut slices of cheese into triangles and put each triangle on a toothpick. Place the toothpicks into the peanut butter to create sails. As you eat your boats together, talk about why Paul sailed on boats. Pray for people traveling by boat today.
- Practice your memory verse.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss 2 Corinthians 8:16-21. Talk about Paul's and Titus' concern for the new church in Corinth. What is the meaning of the word "enthusiasm"? Discuss it together. Do you help others with much enthusiasm? Why?
- Verse 19 mentions an offering. Whom was this offering to help? (Read Romans 15:26.) Decorate a jar or box to collect coins for the poor this week. Take this offering to church on Sabbath.

Tuesday

- During family worship, read and discuss 2 Corinthians 8:22-24. Who went to visit the church in Corinth? Why?

- Ask an adult to hang a picture of Jesus or the word JESUS out of your reach. Try to reach it. Then ask them to lift you up, so you can reach it. Should we help others by lifting them up so they can see and know Jesus? How can you do that in real life? Talk about it with your family. Ask God to help you.
- Make up a tune for your memory verse.

Wednesday

- Together with your family, read and discuss 2 Corinthians 9:1-5. About what is Paul reminding the Corinthians?
- Taking collections to help others happens also in nature. Learn about worker bees. What do they collect? Why? Draw and color a bee.
- Say your memory verse.
- Sing "I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124) before prayer.

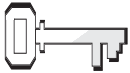
Thursday

- Read and discuss 2 Corinthians 9:6-8 with your family. How does God want us to give to help others? Circle the right word:
grudgingly cheerfully
- Make one boat cutout for each word in your memory verse, plus one for the reference. Write one word of the verse on each. Mix up the cutouts; then arrange them in order.

Friday

- Tell and act out your Bible lesson story for your family during evening worship.
- Did you make plans with your primary class to distribute food to those in need? Share with your family how you feel about helping others.
- Who else willingly gave what she had to help others? (Read Mark 12:41-44.) _____
- Count the money you saved all week for those in need. Ask a family member to help you fill out a tithe envelope. Put the money in it. Take it to church tomorrow.

Return of the Runaway



References

Philemon; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 456-460



Memory Verse

"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people" (Ephesians 6:7, NIV).



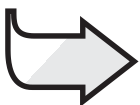
Objectives

The children will:

Know that Christian service begins at home.

Feel willing to help at home.

Respond by looking for ways to serve others at home.



The Message

I can serve Jesus at home.

Monthly Theme

We begin serving at home.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Onesimus, a pagan slave, wrongs his master Philemon, a Christian believer in Colossae, and escapes to Rome. He becomes acquainted with Paul, who shares the gospel with him. Onesimus listens, confesses his sins, and becomes a Christian. Paul sees that he has special gifts from God. He urges him to return home to his master, beg for forgiveness, and plan for a future of service. In a letter to Philemon, Paul tells about Onesimus' conversion, offers to repay any debt Onesimus might owe him, and with kindness and tact, pleads with Philemon to forgive his slave and to receive him back into his service as a brother in Christ.

This is a lesson about service.

Onesimus, once a slave, became a servant of God and of God's servant, Paul. Just as Paul encouraged Onesimus to go back home to serve his master, Philemon, and encouraged Philemon to accept his former slave as a brother in Christ, so God asks us to serve and accept one another in our homes and families today.

Teacher Enrichment

"The NT does not directly attack the institution of slavery, but it does outline principles that would eventually prove fatal to this institution. In view of the social structure of the Roman Empire Paul's procedure could hardly be improved upon. He proclaimed the principles of Christian freedom throughout and led men to acknowledge the inhumaneness of slavery. Thus he carried out God's plan for solving the slave problem by the slower process of growth and enlightenment, rather than by direct attack upon it" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 7, p. 384).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	See Readiness A.
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. May I Show You to Your Seat?</i> <i>B. Teamwork</i> <i>C. Find the Runaways</i>	Bibles, rope across door of Sabbath School, sign stating "Please wait to be seated." Bibles, large button-up shirt, mittens, cup of water, shoes with shoestrings, small sheet of paper with activity list for each child, pencils small cutouts of people, tape
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container used last week <i>Sing for Joy</i> songbooks
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	small towel or washcloth for each child paper napkin for each child, piece of string or ribbon for each napkin, pretty serving tray Bibles, paper, pencils
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Serving at Home</i>	one inflated balloon for each six to eight children
4 Sharing the lesson	up to 15	<i>Balloon Plans</i>	uninflated balloon for each child, pens, small pieces of paper

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

See Readiness A.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- rope across door of Sabbath School
- sign stating "Please wait to be seated."

A. May I Show You to Your Seat?

Prepare in advance a rope across the door of your Sabbath School room and a sign stating, "Please wait to be seated." Greet each child by saying, "Welcome to Sabbath School. May I show you to your seat?" Have an adult seat each child personally.

Debriefing

After every child is seated in this manner, ask: **Did you enjoy our seating service? Today's Sabbath School is about service—and our Bible story tells of a runaway slave who went back home to serve after he became a follower of Jesus. Let's find and read Ephesians 6:7. Read aloud. This verse asks us to serve also. Today our message is about one place we can serve:**



I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

For each group—

- Bibles
- large button-up shirt
- mittens
- cup of water
- shoes with shoestrings
- small sheet of paper with activity list for each child
- pencils

B. Teamwork

In advance, prepare a list of the following activities on a sheet of paper for each child.

- _____ Put the shirt on backward and button it up.
- _____ Scratch your head without using your hands.
- _____ Sit on your hands and get a drink of water.
- _____ Put on mittens and tie your shoes.

Divide the students into groups of four to eight. Each child should do each activity and may get help from one other person when needed. They are to check off each activity as they do it.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel when you needed help?** (Frustrated at first, but glad someone helped me.) **Did you like helping someone?** (yes) **Why is it often hard to ask for help?** (Wait for responses.) **Were you afraid, uncertain, proud?** **There are lots of things that we can do to help others. When we serve others, we are serving Jesus. Let's find and read Ephesians 6:7. Read aloud. A very good place to start serving others is at home. That is today's message.**



I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

Say that with me.

C. Find the Runaways

In advance, cut out pictures of people from old magazines and number them. Hide

the cutouts around the room.

Give each child a number. Say: **There are (number you have hidden) pictures of runaways around the room. They are people who do not want to help, so they have run away. Can you find one? If you find yours quickly, help someone else find theirs. When all of you have found a runaway, come back to your seat.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **How hard was it to find your “runaway”?** (hard, easy, needed help, etc.) **In Bible times some people had slaves who did most of the work around the house and in the fields. Why do you think a slave might run away? Today we are going to learn about a runaway slave who returned to his master.**

Say: **At home we all help with the chores. Does that make us slaves?** (No. It makes us helpers.) **When we help at home, we are serving Jesus. Our message says:**



I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- small cutouts of people, one for each child
- tape

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129)
- "Love at Home" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 137)
- "This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106)
- "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **Where did the people in today's story serve Jesus? At home? At church? In their city?**



Offering

Ask: **Are you serving by saving money at home to bring for our special offering on Thirteenth Sabbath? Can you encourage others in your family to do the same thing?**

You Need:

- offering device used last week



Prayer

Have the children form a circle and sing "This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106) in the attitude of prayer. Then invite each of them to pray silently that God will help them to serve in a particular way at home.

You Need:

- *Sing for Joy* songbooks

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- small towel or washcloth for each child

Experiencing the Story

Let the children interact during the story. Give them each a small towel or washcloth to put on their arm.

When you say:	They do:
Onesimus	Stand up with a towel on their arm and bow.
Philemon	Stand up and salute.
Paul	Stand up and make a writing motion.

Optional: Form three groups and assign a different name and activity to each.

Read or tell the story.

Paul [*stand up and make a writing motion*] was busy writing when a young man with a backpack over his shoulder came and stood beside him. The young man was dressed for travel. **Paul** [*stand up and make a writing motion*] smiled as he signed the letter he had been writing. He rolled it up and handed it to the young man.

"Here, **Onesimus** [*stand up with a towel on their arm and bow*]," he said. "Here is the letter I promised to write. It is addressed to your master, **Philemon**. [*stand up and salute*]. Give it to him as soon as you get home." **Paul** [*stand up and make a writing motion*] stood and put his arm around the young man's shoulders.

"I told him that you are like a son to me now. I know that in the past you were not as useful to him as you have been to me these past few months. But now that you have accepted Jesus and love Him, I know that you will serve **Philemon** [*stand up and salute*] just as

well as you have served me."

The young man smiled.

Paul [*stand up and make a writing motion*] continued: "We all know that he has the right to be very angry with you for running away. But I told him that you have been helping me just as he would help me if he were here. I hope that he will think about that. I also told him in this letter that even though you are still his slave, you are also a brother in Christ now that you have become a Christian."

Onesimus [*stand up with a towel on their arm and bow*] put his arm around **Paul's** [*stand up and make a writing motion*] shoulder, then put the letter in the bag he had slung over his shoulder.

"One more thing," **Paul** [*stand up and make a writing motion*] continued as the two walked toward the door. "I will pay whatever amount you owe **Philemon**. [*stand up and salute*]. He actually owes me his life, since I was the one who told him about Jesus." **Paul** [*stand up and make a writing motion*] smiled.

"I can never thank you enough." **Onesimus** [*stand up with a towel on their arm and bow*] threw his bag over his shoulder, almost ready to leave, but not quite yet.

"Just go back home and serve **Philemon** [*stand up and salute*] as well as you have served me. That is what Christians do, son; they serve one another right where they are. Now that you are a Christian too, I know that the two of you will get along a lot better."

Paul [*stand up and make a writing motion*] gave **Onesimus** [*stand up with a towel on their arm and bow*] shoulder a pat as he finally turned to go.

"I'd keep you here to help me if I could. But you have to go back home and be willing to serve **Philemon** [*stand up and salute*] first. Maybe someday he

will let you come back to me.”

Paul *[stand up and make a writing motion]* waved as **Onesimus** *[stand up with a towel on their arm and bow]* started down the path. “Tell **Philemon** *[stand up and salute]* to prepare a room for me,” he called after the young man. “I am trusting that God will answer his prayers, and that I will be able to come and see you both before too long.”

Onesimus *[stand up with a towel on their arm and bow]* gave one last wave over his shoulder and then didn’t look back anymore. He was a little afraid of going back to the master he had run away from. But now he was a Christian, and his heart was full of the love of God that **Paul** *[stand up and make a writing motion]* had shown him. He was ready to try again to serve **Philemon** *[stand up and salute]* the way he should. After all, **Paul** *[stand up and make a writing motion]* had taught him that being of service at home is a big part of what being a Christian is all about.

Debriefing

Ask: **If you were Onesimus, how do you think you would feel about going back to your master after you ran away?** (Scared, but glad I was making things right.)

Why did Paul urge Onesimus to serve at home first? (That’s what God wanted him to do.)

Where did you first learn to serve Jesus? (at home, etc.) **Does serving your family make you a slave?** (No, it makes me a helper.) **Let’s remember our message:**



I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Prepare in advance paper napkins for each child by writing the memory verse on each napkin, rolling the napkin, and tying it with a piece of string or ribbon. [The memory verse is: **“Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people” (Ephesians 6:7, NIV).**] Place them on a pretty serving tray. Serve each child and say, “May I serve you?”

Each child may take a napkin, open it, and repeat the memory verse. Have the children say the verse several times until it becomes familiar.

Bible Study

Say: **Paul’s letter to Philemon is found in the little book of Philemon. Let’s pretend that we are Paul and write his letter.**

Assign different verses to each child to write, until all the verses are assigned. Whoever has verse 25 can sign Paul’s name at the end.

When everyone has written their portion, ask the children to read their verses in order until the whole letter is read. Adapt according to the children’s writing and reading abilities.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you like getting letters?** (yes) **How do you think Philemon liked his letter from Paul?** (Accept answers.)

The Bible doesn’t say how Philemon reacted. Did Onesimus do the right thing by going back home to serve?

Jesus wants us to serve our family at home. What is today’s message? Let’s say it:



I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

You Need:

- paper napkin for each child
- piece of string or ribbon for each napkin
- pretty serving tray

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- one inflated balloon for each six to eight children

Serving at Home

Prepare in advance one inflated balloon for every six to eight children in your class. Arrange each group in a circle.

Have them choose who will be Mom, Dad, brother, sister, etc., in their “home circle.” Then ask them to hit the balloon to a “family member,” thinking of something nice to say as they hit the balloon (kind Suzie, cheerful Tommy, Mom is a really good cook . . . , etc.).

When a child receives the balloon and compliment, they must hit the balloon and say something nice about someone else. Make sure everyone has a turn to hit the balloon.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did it feel to be served with nice words in your “home circle”?** (good, encouraging) **What did you think about serving your “family” with nice words?** (I had a good feeling—much better than when I serve mean words.)

Today’s lesson is about serving Jesus at home. Why did Paul send Onesimus home to serve his master again? (Because it is important to serve at home. Service for Jesus should begin in our homes or wherever we belong.)

In what ways other than using nice words can you serve others at your home? (Make beds, pick up toys, feed our pets, etc.) **Let’s say today’s message again:**



I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- uninflated balloon for each child
- pens
- small pieces of paper

Balloon Plans

Say: **Now we are going to use some balloons to make plans to serve members of our family.**

Have each child take an uninflated balloon and write on it an act of service at home (setting table, making beds, picking up toys, coming when called, feeding pets, etc.).

Then, on a small piece of paper have them write the name of the family member they plan to serve, insert the paper into the balloon, and blow the balloon up and tie it off. Encourage each child to give their balloon to a family member with the promise of how and when they will serve them.

Debriefing

Say: **Balloons remind me of joy. When you wrote an act of service on your balloon, it was like saying that you want to serve with joy. Is that what you want to do?** (Give the children a chance to react.) **Who wants to serve at home joyfully and not just because you have to?** (Invite the children to raise their hands.) **Now let’s say our message one last time:**

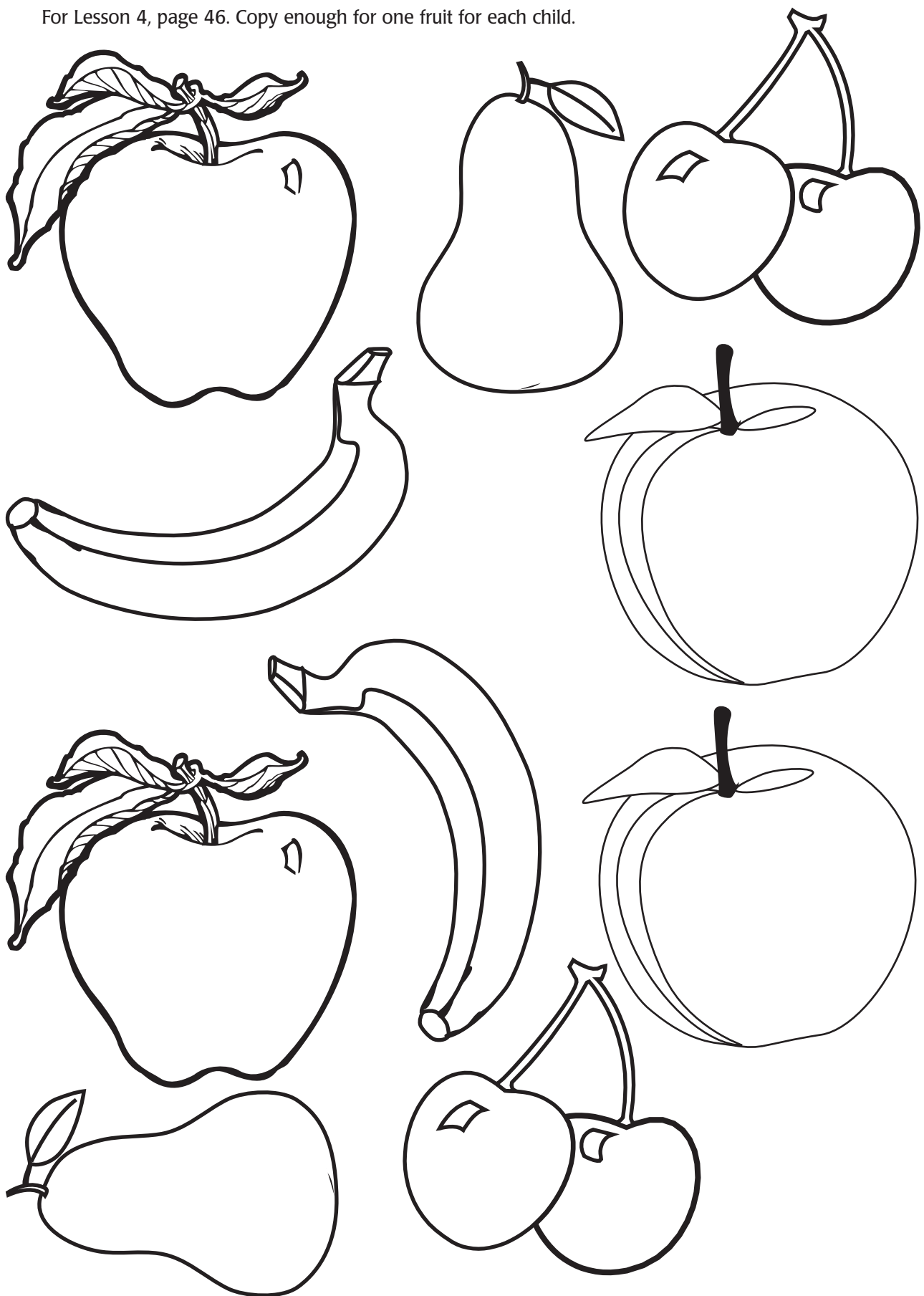


I CAN SERVE JESUS AT HOME.

Closing

Close with prayer, asking God to help the children to joyfully carry out their plans to serve at home this week.

For Lesson 4, page 46. Copy enough for one fruit for each child.



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Return of the Runaway

References

Philemon; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 456-460

Memory Verse:

"Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people" (Ephesians 6:7, NIV).

The Message

I can serve Jesus at home.

How would you like it if someone lived at your house and made your bed for you every day or cleaned your room? If you had a servant or a slave, that would probably happen.

Years ago a young man was such a slave. But he became unhappy, and he ran away. Then he met Paul. It might have happened this way . . .

Paul looked up as a tall young man came and stood beside him. The young man was dressed for travel and carried a backpack over his shoulder. Paul smiled, then looked down at the letter he had just written. He signed it, rolled it up, and handed it to the young man.

"Here, Onesimus," he said, "this is the letter I promised you. It is addressed to your master, Philemon. Give it to him as soon as you get home."

Paul stood and put his arm around the young man's shoulders. "I

told him that you are like a son to me. I know that in the past you were not as useful to him as you have been to me these past few months. But now you have accepted Jesus, and love Him. I know that you will serve Philemon just as well as you have served me."

The young man smiled shyly.

Paul continued: "We all know that he has the right to be angry with you for running away. But I told him that you have been helping me just as he would help me if he were here. I hope he will think about that. I also told him that even though you are still his slave, you are also his brother in Christ; you have become a Christian."

Onesimus put his arm around Paul's shoulder. Then he released Paul and put the letter in the bag he had slung over his shoulder. While his head was bent, he brushed a tear out of his eye. He hoped no one would notice.

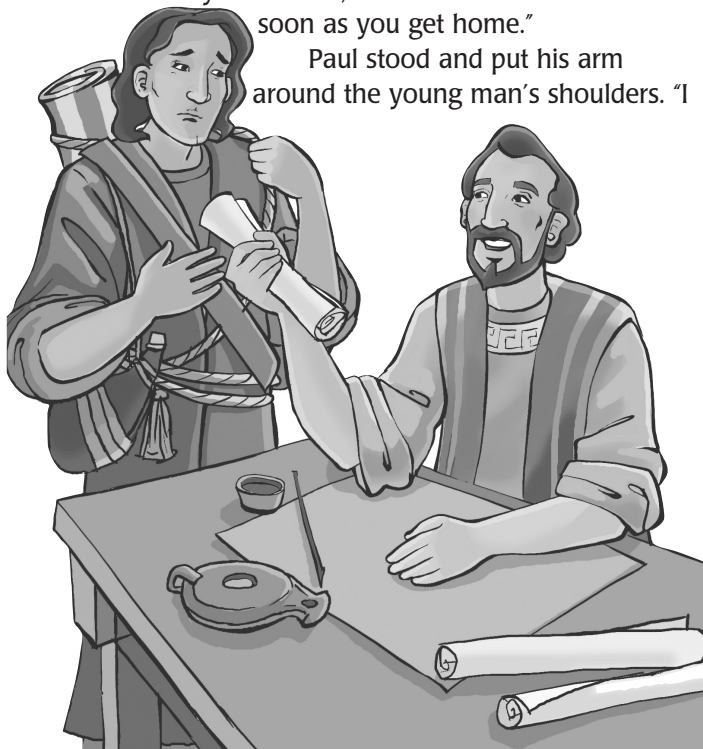
"One more thing," Paul continued, as the two walked toward the door. "I will pay whatever amount you might owe your master Philemon. He actually owes me his life, since I was the one who told him about Jesus." Paul smiled as he stopped in the doorway.

"I can never thank you enough!" Onesimus exclaimed. He threw his bag over his shoulder, lingering a moment.

"Just go back home and serve Philemon as well as you have served me. Now that you are a Christian too, I know that the two of you will get along a lot better." Paul gave Onesimus' shoulder a pat as the young man finally turned to go.

"I'd keep you here to help me if I could. But you have to go back home and be willing to serve Philemon first. Maybe someday he will let you come back to me."

Paul waved as Onesimus started down the path. "I have asked Philemon to prepare a room for me," he called after the young man. "I am trusting that God



will answer my prayers and that I will be able to come and see you both before long.”

Onesimus gave one last wave over his shoulder and then didn't look back. He was a little afraid to go back to the master he had run away from. But now he was a Christian, and his heart was full of the love of God. He was ready to try again to serve Philemon the way he should. After all, Paul had taught him that being of service at home was a big part of being a Christian.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Take a walk with your family. Find a quiet place and share your lesson together. Imagine that you are Onesimus. Tell your family what you think will happen when you get to Philemon's house. Ask them what it was like to be a slave in Roman times.
- Read Ephesians 6:7 and tell your family what it means to you.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss the beginning of Paul's letter in Philemon 1-7.
- Give a family member the balloon you decorated in Sabbath School. Or write an act of service for a family member on a balloon. Write their name on paper and put it inside. Then blow up the balloon and give it to the person as a happy surprise.
- Say your memory verse as you pretend to walk home to Philemon. Pray for people who don't have freedom to attend church.

Monday

- Read and discuss Philemon 8-11 with your family.
- Write your memory verse on a paper napkin, leaving plenty of space between words. Cut between the words. Put the napkin puzzle parts together in the right order. Why use a napkin for your memory verse?
- Sing “Love at Home” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 137). Then ask Jesus to help you serve others today.

Tuesday

- With your family, read and discuss Philemon 12-14.
- Plan to be a secret servant today at home. Do something to help a member of your family

without letting them know.

- Say your memory verse without help. Then pray for each family member.

Wednesday

- Read and discuss Philemon 15-17 for family worship. How did you serve at home today?
- Paul sent letters by messenger. Name some ways you can get messages to people who live far away. Use two ways today to tell someone that Jesus loves them.
- Make up a tune and sing your memory verse.

Thursday

- With your family, read and discuss Philemon 18-25.
- Find the names of two servants by reading the following Bible verses:
 - He took care of the family sheep. (1 Samuel 16:10-13)
 - He served God in Eli's home—his other home. (1 Samuel 1:20 and 2:11)
- Ask your family: How is being a servant today different from Paul's time?
- Draw a picture to show what your memory verse means to you. Explain it to your family.

Friday

- Today is a good day to be a servant at home. What can you do to help your family prepare for Sabbath?
- For family worship, act out Paul writing the letter to Philemon. In your own words, write what was in the letter. Pass the letter to someone in your family who will represent Onesimus.
- Read Galatians 5:13 together. How can your family live this text at home?
- Say your memory verse together.
- Sing together “This Is My Prayer” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106).

LESSON FOUR

Please Bring My Coat

References

2 Timothy; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 498-508



Memory Verse



"God . . . will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them" (Hebrews 6:10, NIV).

Objectives

The children will:

Know that God wants us to help those who serve Him.

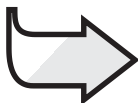
Feel eager to help people who serve God.

Respond by looking for ways to help and encourage their pastor and other people who serve God.



The Message

When we help people who serve God, we serve God too.



Monthly Theme

We begin serving at home.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Paul is in a Roman prison. Many of the believers desert him. But Timothy continues to faithfully serve by caring for the church at Ephesus. Paul longs to see Timothy and determines to send for him. Just in case he died before Timothy can reach him, Paul writes the Second Epistle to Timothy. He thanks Timothy for his support, and gives him counsel. He asks Timothy to deliver greetings to his friends, and to come and bring him things he needs.

This is a lesson about service.

In his letter to Timothy, Paul names people who have assisted him throughout his ministry, both in teaching the gospel and in personal ways. Not all of us feel qualified to teach and preach, but we can help those who do. A kind word, a smile, a simple gift, getting things for them (see 2 Timothy 4:13), will bring gladness and support to those whose lives are devoted to the many responsibilities involved in serving God.

Teacher Enrichment

It is not clear what led to Paul's second and final arrest. During his first imprisonment in Rome, Paul had been given many favors. This time he was treated as a common criminal and was chained. Almost everyone deserted him, and he felt very lonely and isolated. Early Christian authors are unanimous in declaring that Paul died under Nero, and tradition says that he was decapitated somewhere on the Ostian Way. He died sometime between A.D. 66 and 68. (See *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, pp. 856, 857.)

"Because he was a prisoner in a damp and chilly dungeon, Paul asked Timothy to bring him his cloak. Even more than the cloak, Paul wanted his parchments. These may have included parts of the Old Testament, the Gospels, copies of his own letters, or other important documents" (*Life Application Study Bible Notes and Bible Helps on 2 Timothy 4:13* [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, 1991], p. 2051).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>A Special Letter</i> B. <i>Giving Back</i>	Bibles, letters prepared in advance for each child, mailbox pitcher of water, small paper cups
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container used last week chalkboard or whiteboard, chalk or dry-erase marker
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bibles, yarn (or other "chains"), prison backdrop, blank paper for scroll, pen, picture of your pastor (if available) pens, paper, envelope for each child; memory verse posted for all to see; white/chalkboard; markers/chalk Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Service Tree</i>	"Service Tree" from Lesson 2 or use a large leafless tree or a large tree picture, fruit cutouts in basket (see p. 37), hole punch, paper clips, banner
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Thank You, Pastor!</i>	dowel rod, 1 yard (1 meter) of light-colored cloth, yarn or string, scissors, bright markers, fabric paint or glitter glue (if available)

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Ask them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- letters prepared in advance for each child
- mailbox

A. A Special Letter

Prepare in advance a letter for each child, saying, "[name], I appreciate you because. . . ." As you prepare this activity, pray about each child, that God will bring to mind something that individual most needs to hear from you. Make a few generic ones for visitors by writing, "I appreciate your coming to our Sabbath School. Now we have a new friend." Put all the letters in a mailbox. As the children arrive, direct them to the mailbox to discover their sealed envelope.

Debriefing

After each child has received a letter and is seated, ask: **Isn't it fun to get mail?** (yes, most of the time, etc.) **This letter was put in a mailbox but what are some other ways that we get letters or messages today?** (Allow for responses.) **From whom do you most like to get a letter?** (Allow for responses.) **In our story Paul sends a letter to someone who had helped him. Let's find and read Hebrews 6:10. What does this verse tell us?**



WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO SERVE GOD, WE SERVE GOD TOO.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- pitcher of water
- small paper cups

B. Giving Back

In advance, fill a pitcher with water and provide a small cup for each child. Label the pitcher "service" and pour a small amount of water into each child's cup.

Explain that the people who serve God are like the pitcher; they are always giving to others. As the pitcher nears empty, explain that we can take care of God's servants by helping to give back to them. Have each of the children pour part of their water back into the pitcher. Say: **One way to give back to those who serve God is to thank them for all that they do. We can let them know that we appreciate their work.**

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Do you always remember to thank people for what they do?** (yes, not always, sometimes, etc.) **How do you feel when someone thanks you for helping them? How do you feel when you try your best to help and no one seems to notice? In our lesson today Paul sends a thank-you letter to someone who helped him. We can be helpers of God's servants too. Today's message tells us:**



WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO SERVE GOD, WE SERVE GOD TOO.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 129)

"This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106)

"I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124)

"The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **If you were living in the place where today's mission story happened, how could you help the people who are serving God in that place?**



Offering

Say: **Giving an offering is one way to help those who serve God.**

You Need:

- offering container used last week



Prayer

Ask the children to help you list for all to see the leaders of your local church. Divide into groups of three or four. Assign parts of the list to each prayer band. Invite them to pray for these church leaders.

You Need:

- white/chalkboard
- markers/chalk

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bibles
- yarn (or other “chains”)
- prison backdrop
- blank paper for scroll
- pen
- picture of your pastor (if available)

Experiencing the Story

Have all the children sit on the floor near the prison backdrop. Those who are dressed appropriately are to draw their knees up to their chest and hold their ankles. Wrap the paper/yarn chain (made by stapling or taping a strip of paper to form a circle, then looping another strip through it, forming that into a circle and then stapling or taping that, and so on) around their hands and feet. If paper chains are not available, ask them to sit without moving till the end of the lesson story. Girls in dresses can keep their legs straight as they wear “chains” around their hands and feet.

Read or tell the story.

Paul sat on the cold stone floor, his ankles in chains. Even though he was now one of Jesus’ strongest defenders, Paul remembered how he used to be cruel to people who believed in Jesus. The Roman emperor Nero was the one being cruel to Christians now. Paul was certain that he would be put to death by Nero.

Paul smiled, remembering his young assistant, Timothy, who had become like a son to him. Timothy’s family had invited Paul into their home many times. From the time he was a baby, Timothy had been taught about Jesus. Timothy had cried when he and Paul had said goodbye the last time.

Although Paul had been thrown in prison several times for preaching the good news, he had a feeling that he wasn’t going to survive this time. He was old. The weather was getting colder and colder as winter approached. And if the cold weather didn’t kill him, he was quite sure the emperor would.

[Take up the blank scroll and pen and pretend to write as you read about Paul writing to Timothy.] Paul took up a sheet of parchment paper and a pen and began his final letter to Timothy.

“To Timothy, my dear son,” he began. “I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy.”

Paul was lonely. It seemed as though Christians were losing their faith and becoming silent about their belief in Jesus. Paul felt that everyone in Asia had deserted him. No one had come to his defense when he was on trial. That was why the few people who had encouraged him meant so much to him.

Paul listed the name of one friend who had searched throughout Rome to find him in prison and had visited him. He asked Timothy to deliver his greetings to several others who had served with him and cared for his personal needs. And finally, he asked Timothy to come visit him and bring him his coat, because it was cold in the stone prison.

Pastors also feel lonely sometimes. They spend most of their time thinking about what other people need. Wouldn’t it be a wonderful surprise if you planned a way you could help your pastor? *[Show your pastor’s picture, if available.]* It doesn’t take much to be of service. A smile, or flowers after church, even giving them a drink of water will bring your pastor such joy. And it will make you feel good too. Why not try it and see for yourself?

Debriefing

Ask: **What was it like to sit on the floor in chains?** (uncomfortable) **How long do you think you could sit there?** (Accept answers.) **Paul continued to be faithful to God even though he was uncomfortable.**

God sent Timothy to comfort and help Paul. How was Timothy serving God by helping Paul? (God loved Paul, and Timothy was helping someone God loved dearly.) **Let's read Matthew 25:34-40.** Read the text aloud. **When we help people, we serve God. Remember our message:**



WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO SERVE GOD, WE SERVE GOD TOO.

Memory Verse

Say: **Paul wrote many letters. Today you will write someone a letter to encourage them.**

Have the students copy the memory verse, or present a copy of the letter as shown below

for students who are not able to write the entire letter on their own. Have the students address it to the person sitting to their right then sign their name at the bottom.

Dear [name of the child to their right],

God will not forget your work and the love you have shown Him as you have helped His people and continue to help them.

*Your friend,
[name of child writing]*

When they finish, have them place it in an envelope, address it, and give it to the student on their right. Have everyone open their letter, then read and repeat the memory verse together.

Bible Study

In advance, write the following where all can see.

You Need:

- pens
- paper
- envelope for each child
- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk
- memory verse posted for all to see

You Need:

- Bibles
- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk

WHO	SERVED	WHOM
Martha		Elijah
Samuel		Paul and Silas
Aaron and Hur		Elisha
Philippian jailer		Eli
Shunammite woman		Paul
Timothy		Jesus
Widow of Zarephath		Moses

Have the children read the texts below and tell you who served whom. Then draw a line connecting the two matching names on the board.

Exodus 17:8-13	(Aaron and Hur served Moses.)
1 Samuel 3:1, 4, 5	(Samuel served Eli.)
1 Kings 17:7-15	(The widow of Zarephath served Elijah.)
2 Kings 4:8-10	(The Shunammite woman served Elisha.)
John 12:1, 2	(Martha served Jesus.)
Acts 16:22, 23, 33, 34	(Philippian jailer served Paul and Silas.)
2 Timothy 1:2; 4:9-13	(Timothy served Paul.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think you might feel if you were a leader?** (sometimes lonely, tired, happy, sad, etc.) **What needs did each of the people who were served have?** (Elijah was hungry; Elisha needed a place to stay; etc.)

These leaders all had needs. Your church leaders have needs too, and we can help them. Let's say today's message together.



WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO SERVE GOD, WE SERVE GOD TOO.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- "Service Tree" from Lesson 2 (see Lesson 2, Activity A, or use a large leafless tree or large tree picture)
- fruit cutouts in a basket (see p. 37)
- hole punch
- paper clips
- banner

Service Tree

Have the children take a paper fruit from the basket and write on it the name of a church member and how they serve the church. Ideas include: pianist, secretary, pastor, teachers, deacons, elders, singers, greeters, etc.

Punch a hole in the top of the fruit, insert a paper clip hook, and hang it on the tree. Add a banner with the words "Thank you for serving each week." If possible, display the "tree" with its banner in the foyer.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

What do you think about making a "service tree"? How would you like it if someone made a big thank-you tree

for you?

How did Paul's friends help him?

(They gave him friendship, a place to stay, help with preaching, etc.) **We may not be able to do any of those things, but we can help.**

What are some ways we can show our appreciation for the people who serve us in God's church? (Help keep the church building clean; help with church programs; invite them home to Sabbath dinner; tell them thank you; cheerfully do what they ask; send thank-you notes or cards; help them with their work, etc.)

Remember our message? Let's say it together again.



WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO SERVE GOD, WE SERVE GOD TOO.

Sharing the Lesson

Thank You, Pastor!

Make a banner for your pastor. If possible, arrange to have him or her visit your class a few minutes before the end of Sabbath School.

Fold over about three inches at the top of the cloth to make a pocket. Stitch or glue the fabric and insert the dowel. Cut and attach yarn to both ends of the dowel rod to hang the banner.

Write the words "Thank you, Pastor _____, for serving us!" in big letters for the children to trace over with markers or fabric paint. At the bottom of the banner the children may add: "We're praying for you!" They can also trace around their hand on the banner and sign their names on the outline of their hand. Add other decorations with glitter glue or fabric paint.

If the pastor can come at the end of Sabbath School, greet him or her with a standing ovation and present the banner. Ask questions about their work as a pastor. Or arrange to present the banner during announcement time at church.

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you like about making a thank-you banner for our pastor?** (It was fun. I want to thank our pastor[s] for all they do for our church.)

Can you think of some other things that we could do to say thank you to our pastor? (Help keep the church clean; be quiet in church; invite their family for a meal; etc.) **Let's remember ...**



WHEN WE HELP PEOPLE WHO SERVE GOD, WE SERVE GOD TOO.

Alternate Activity

Have children honor the pastor or others with a bulletin insert they create. Let them help pass out the bulletins on the Sabbath the insert is to be included.

Closing

Ask God to continue to guide your church leaders, and pray that the children will find definite ways to help them.

You Need:

- dowel rod
- 1 yard (1 meter) of light-colored cloth
- yarn or string
- scissors
- bright markers
- fabric paint or glitter glue (if available)

Please Bring My Coat

References

2 Timothy; *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 498-508

Memory Verse

"God . . . will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them" (Hebrews 6:10, NIV).

The Message

When we help people who serve God, we serve God too.

Have you ever traveled a long way from home? Have you ever gone to visit relatives? Have you ever been to camp? How did it feel to sleep in a new place? Did you get a letter or package while you were there? How would getting a letter from home make you feel?

Paul knew what it was like to be away from home and friends.

Four stone walls surrounded him. Up toward the ceiling a small window tried to light the darkness in that prison cell. The cold stone floor he was sitting on seemed to be part of his body. His ankles were chained to the floor as though he were a dangerous animal. But he was not dangerous; he was Paul, a servant of God.

Early in his life Paul had cruelly treated people who believed Jesus was God's Son. He had even ordered some to be put to death by stoning. But God had changed his life, and Paul became one of Jesus' strongest defenders.

At this time the Roman emperor, Nero, was against Christians. Many Christians had been put to death because they worshipped Jesus. Paul was certain that he would be put to death too. Paul was

thinking about his young friend, Timothy. Timothy had become like a son to him. The young man had cried the last time they said goodbye. From the time he was a child, Timothy had been taught about Jesus. His family had invited Paul into their home many times. Now a young man, Timothy often traveled with Paul. Together they had preached and encouraged other Christians.

Paul had been thrown into prison several times for preaching the good news. But he had a feeling that he wouldn't survive this time. He was older. The weather was turning colder and colder as winter approached. And if the cold weather didn't kill him, the emperor probably would.

Paul took up a sheet of parchment and a pen. Thoughtfully he began his last letter to Timothy.

"To Timothy, my dear son," he began. "I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy" (2 Timothy 1:2-4). He reminded Timothy that Jesus had destroyed death. That was the good news everyone needed to hear so they could be joyful! Paul was not ashamed to suffer for sharing this good news with others. It was such good news. And he was eager to tell everyone!

However, Paul was lonely. It seemed that everyone in Asia had deserted him. No one had come to his defense when he was on trial. The few people who had encouraged him meant so much to him.

Paul listed the name of one friend who had searched throughout Rome to find and visit him in prison. He asked Timothy to deliver his greetings to several others who had served with him and cared for his personal needs. And finally, he asked Timothy to come visit him before winter and bring him his coat. It was cold in the stone prison.



Pastors also feel lonely sometimes. They spend most of their time thinking about the needs of others. Wouldn't it be a wonderful surprise if you planned a way to help your pastor? It doesn't take much to be of service. A smile, flowers after church, even a drink of water will bring your pastor joy. And it will make you feel good too. Why not try it?

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go on a nature "color walk" with your family. Appoint a leader. Each person looks for nature objects of a certain color. Make a list of the objects you find and give it to the leader, who makes a long list. Thank God for beautiful colors.
- Read your Bible story together. Who was the leader in this week's lesson? Read and discuss Hebrews 6:10. Teach it to your family.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss the first chapter of 2 Timothy—Paul's last epistle (letter) before he died. What final advice did Paul give to Timothy?
- Make a shoe box model that shows the rooms inside your church. Make cutouts of your church leaders and place them where they usually serve God. Then ask God to bless them as they serve your church. How can your family help them?
- Review your memory verse with your family.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss 2 Timothy 2:1-13; then review your memory verse.
- Make a list of the leaders in your church. Make plans to do something special for one of them this week.
- With your family, appoint a leader and play "Follow the Leader."
- Sing "Give Me Oil in My Lamp" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 132) before prayer.

Tuesday

- Together with your family, read and discuss 2 Timothy 2:14-26. Review your memory verse and draw pictures of what it means to you.
- Try sitting on a cement or tile floor for two minutes. How do you think Paul felt while sitting in prison?

- In what other places do people serve God besides your church? How can you help the people who work in those places?

Wednesday

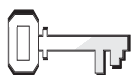
- Read and discuss 2 Timothy 3 with your family. Review your memory verse. What will God *not* forget?
- Have an adult tie your ankles (loosely) together. Then try to walk across the room. What would it be like if it were a chain?
- Being a Christian parent is serving God. Help your parent(s) serve your family today, and you will be serving God too. Pray for your parents today.

Thursday

- For family worship, read and discuss 2 Timothy 4.
- Paul depended on Timothy. What personal favors did Paul ask of him? (See verses 9, 11, 13, 19, and 21.)
- Make a coat out of newspaper. Tape or staple it together. What kind of coat did Paul need? Thank God for warm clothes.
- Say today's memory verse as you think about Timothy's helpfulness. Does this verse tell about you also?

Friday

- Use cushions or pillows to make a "prison." Sit in your "prison" with your family and tell them about Paul and Timothy.
- Read Hebrews 13:7. How has your pastor served your family? Make a special card for him or her, and sign it as a family. Give it to your pastor in church tomorrow.
- What else can your family do tomorrow to help live out your memory verse? Say your memory verse together before prayer.
- Sing "This Is My Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 106).



References

Isaiah 6; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 303-310



Memory Verse

"Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for" (Isaiah 6:7, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that God promises to forgive us and change our lives.
Feel changed by God's love and grace.
Respond by asking for God's forgiveness.



The Message

Because of God's grace, my sins are forgiven when I ask Him.

Forgiveness Fire

Monthly Theme

God keeps His promises.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Isaiah has a vision in God's temple of the Lord sitting on a throne surrounded by angels singing "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty." The temple is filled with God's glory, and the doorposts shake. Then one seraphim flies to Isaiah and touches his lips with a live coal from the altar, an act that symbolizes purifying and cleansing from sin. Isaiah responds to this gift of grace by answering "Here am I! Send me!" to God's call for a messenger.

This is a lesson about grace.

God promised to forgive and cleanse Isaiah of all his sins. He offers us the same promise of forgiveness and cleansing, a gift of grace to all who will receive it.

Teacher Enrichment

"The throne, the attending seraphs or angels, and the three-fold *holy* all stressed God's holiness. . . . In a time when moral and spiritual decay had peaked, it was important for Isaiah to see God in his holiness. Holiness means morally perfect, pure, and set apart from all sin. We also need to discover God's holiness. Our daily frustrations, society's pressures, and our shortcomings reduce and narrow our view of God. We need the Bible's view of God as high and lifted up to empower us to deal with our problems and concerns. God's moral perfection, properly seen, will purify us from sin, cleanse our minds from our problems, and enable us to worship and to serve" (*Life Application Study Bible*, Notes and Bible Helps on Isa. 6:1-3 [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005], p. 1086).

Room Decorations

Decorate with items from Isaiah's vision—clouds, angels, an altar, tongs—under the caption "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD ALMIGHTY." Or create a large pottery vase cutout. Have all the children sign their names on it. Accompany it with the captions "YOU ARE THE POTTER" and "WE ARE THE CLAY." Place various types of pottery throughout the room.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Did You Know?</i> B. <i>Jesus, the Eraser</i>	Bibles, angel shapes (see p. 57) Bibles, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk, eraser clearly marked with the word JESUS
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> piece of pottery with a sign reading "Send me!" none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible-times costume for "Isaiah" and three angels, cardboard boxes for altar, red cellophane, fan, flashlight, classical religious music, black construction paper or blackened rocks, tongs Bible, tongs, rocks or black rock-shaped cutouts, altar from "Experiencing the Story" Bibles, paper, pencils, markers, crayons
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Clean and Useful</i>	white cloth, food coloring, bleach in container of water
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Forgiven Book</i>	rectangles of 3" x 4" (8 cm. x 10 cm.) red, black, and white construction paper for each child, pencils or markers, stapler and staples

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- angel shapes (see p. 57)

A. Did You Know?

Prepare angel shapes in advance. Fold the shapes in half lengthwise. On the outside write "Did You Know?" On the inside of each, write one of the following:

1. God placed a type of angel called cherubim on the east side of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life.
2. God instructed Moses to have an angel at each end of the cover of the ark of the covenant.
3. God chose angels to announce the birth of Jesus.
4. God chose angels to tell the disciples that Jesus was coming again in the same way they saw Him leave.

Add other facts according to how many angels you wish to use. Place the angels on the walls around the room. As the children arrive, direct them to the angels on the walls to discover facts about angels.

Debriefing

Ask: **After reading the "Did You Know?" angels, what did you learn that you didn't know before?** (Wait for responses.) **God often sends angels with messages of love and grace. We will learn about one such message today. Let's find Isaiah 6:7. Read aloud together. Today's message is another way of saying the same thing:**



BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE, MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN WHEN I ASK HIM.

Say that with me.

(Alternate: Instead of angels, you might use charcoal and charcoal facts, such as: charcoal tablets may be swallowed as a medication for indigestion or stomach virus; artists draw with small sticks of wood charcoal called charcoal pencils; charcoal briquettes are a source of heat and are used for outdoor cooking; powdered charcoal is used for treating bee stings and mosquito bites, and for dyeing leather and making inks and paints.)

B. Jesus, the Eraser

Ask the children to list on the board things people do for which they need Jesus to forgive them. As you talk about the pain or problems that each of those sins has caused, explain that as soon as we ask Him, Jesus immediately erases our sins. As you explain this, use the "Jesus' power" eraser and wipe the board clean.

Debriefing

Ask: **Have you ever thought of how Jesus' power works like an eraser?** (Wait for responses.) **How do you feel about having your sins wiped away?** (relieved, thankful, forgiven) **That is how the man in today's story felt when he was touched by God's grace. Let's read our memory verse from Isaiah 6:7.** Read together. **Today's message is:**



BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE, MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN WHEN I ASK HIM.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk
- eraser clearly marked with the word *Jesus*

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)
- "For God So Loved the World" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 26)
- "O, How He Loves You and Me" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 28)
- "His Banner Over Me Is Love" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 25)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **Who in the story was touched by God's grace? How did God's grace touch them?**



Offering

Say: **Our offering today will be sent to help God's work.**

You Need:

- piece of pottery with a sign reading "Send me!"



Prayer

Form a circle. Give children opportunity to pray. Begin and end the prayer yourself.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible-times costumes for "Isaiah" and three angels
- cardboard boxes for altar
- red cellophane
- fan
- flashlight
- classical religious music
- black construction paper or blackened rocks
- tongs

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Isaiah, and three angels

In advance, build an altar from cardboard boxes. On top place red cellophane for the flames. Use a fan and flashlight to make the cellophane "flicker." As you describe the altar, take a "coal" (made of crumpled black construction paper or blackened rocks) from the altar with tongs. Let the children see the "hot" coals (you may put these back on the altar, or in a separate location).

Read or tell the story.

One day Isaiah was visiting the temple. *[Isaiah stands looking at the altar.]* Suddenly he seemed to be standing in heaven in a dazzling throne room, looking toward God on His throne! *[Isaiah kneels down with hands raised.]* A sacred altar to one side had bright-orange burning coals with a drift of smoke rising from it. *[Point to altar with "fire" and hot coals.]* And what were those bright and shining creatures flying above God's head, suspended in midair?

[Isaiah squints.] Isaiah studied the creatures. He soon realized they were seraphim with six wings.

The angels were singing. *[Start classical music.]* The whole room was filled with the beautiful music. It was so loud and powerful, the doorposts shook. Smoke from the altar filled the room, but Isaiah sensed it was not dangerous; it was holy. God's presence seemed to be a part of the smoke.

But what were the angels saying? Isaiah listened carefully. *[Isaiah listens intently.]* They were calling to one another,

saying "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3, NIV). *[Angels pretend to sing.]*

Isaiah realized where he was. *[Isaiah looks surprised and fearful.]* "I don't belong here with God," he said. "Sometimes I do wrong things."

Isaiah saw one of the angels fly to the burning altar. *[Lift a piece of paper "coal" with the tongs.]* The angel took some tongs and lifted out a piece of burning coal. Then he flew with it toward Isaiah and touched his lips with it. *[One angel touches Isaiah's lips with the paper "coal" held by tongs.]* It didn't hurt, and it didn't burn. The angel said very gently, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away." *[Angel repeats these words.]*

Isaiah felt a wonderful sense of relief. *[Isaiah clasps his hands and smiles broadly.]* God spoke to Isaiah like a kind Father, concerned about His children. God said, "Whom shall I send to take My messages to the people?"

Immediately Isaiah said, "Here am I. Send me!" *[Isaiah says out loud, "Here am I. Send me!"]* He wanted to be God's messenger. God didn't force Isaiah to be a prophet; He first showed His love to Isaiah, and then He allowed Isaiah to volunteer.

God reached out to Isaiah. We call that "grace." And God is still reaching out to each one of us, just as your parents reached down to pick you up when you were a baby. God offers the same promise of forgiveness to you if you will believe Him. He is a Father who keeps His promises and will always love you.

Debriefing

Ask: **What would you think if you had a dream like Isaiah's vision in the**

temple? (It would be awesome! I would be overwhelmed! etc.)

How can Isaiah's vision affect your attitude during a worship service? (I feel loved, accepted, blessed that I can come into His presence. I will be reverent, respectful, and grateful.)

When God forgives your sins, what will you know? Let's answer with today's message:



**BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE,
MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN
WHEN I ASK HIM.**

Memory Verse

In advance, write one word of the memory verse on each rock or rock-shaped cutout, using one for the reference: **"Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for"** (Isaiah 6:7, NIV).

Place them on the altar and let the children take turns removing them with the tongs. Have the children place the words in order on the floor and then repeat the memory verse, removing one word each time, until each "coal" has

You Need:

- Bible
- tongs
- rocks or black rock-shaped cutouts
- altar from "Experiencing the Story"

been removed, and the children can repeat the verse from memory.

Bible Study

Have the children read about the vision that Isaiah saw in the temple in Isaiah 6:1-8. Pause after every few verses and ask them to draw a picture of what they just read.

Debriefing

Say: **God talked with Isaiah in our Bible reading. What did He say to Isaiah?**

Ask: **Does God ever talk with you?** (Wait for responses.) **How?** (He talks to me through the Bible, in my thoughts, through sermons and Sabbath School, through experiences, through advice from my parents, teachers, etc.)

How do you talk to God? (in prayer, in my thoughts)

Say: **God forgave Isaiah's sins. Does He forgive yours? How do you know?**

When your sins have been forgiven, you have been touched by God in a special way. Let's say today's message again:



**BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE,
MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN
WHEN I ASK HIM.**

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils, markers, crayons

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- white cloth
- food coloring
- container of water with bleach

Clean and Useful

Let the children put a drop of food coloring on the cloth. Say: **Isaiah felt guilty and sinful. He felt as though he was of no use to God. God wanted Isaiah to know that He would cleanse Isaiah and forgive his sins, making him useful for His work.** (Drop the cloth into the bleach water.)

Debriefing

As you remove the cloth, ask: **What**

happened to the spot on the cloth? (It is gone. The cloth is clean.) **Can the cloth still be used?** (yes)

Say: **Just like this cloth, God can touch us with His grace, forgive us, make us clean, and use us for His work. How does that make you feel?** (good, grateful, etc.)

Ask: **Do you want God to forgive your sins? Do you want to serve Him too? What is today's message?**



**BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE,
MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN
WHEN I ASK HIM.**

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- rectangles of 3" x 4" (8 cm. x 10 cm.) red, black, and white construction paper for each child
- pencils or markers
- stapler and staples

Forgiven Book

After giving every child one each of red, black, and white construction paper rectangles, create together a "forgiven book" as follows:

Place the black paper on the bottom, the red sheet on top of the black, and the white page on top of the red. Staple at the top. Have the children write the word "sin" on the black page, "blood of Jesus" on the red page, and "forgiven" on the top white page.

Debriefing

Say: **As you flip through your "forgiven book," remember that the blood of Jesus covers your sins and makes your life clean—white as snow.**

Ask: **Can you think of someone**

who is unhappy, who is burdened, who has bad habits, who needs to know that God loves them and will forgive them? (Wait for response.)

Say: **Show your forgiveness book to that person this week and tell them what it means. If God impresses you, ask them if they would like to accept God's forgiveness. Then pray with them to thank God. You are helping them to experience today's message. Let's say it one last time:**

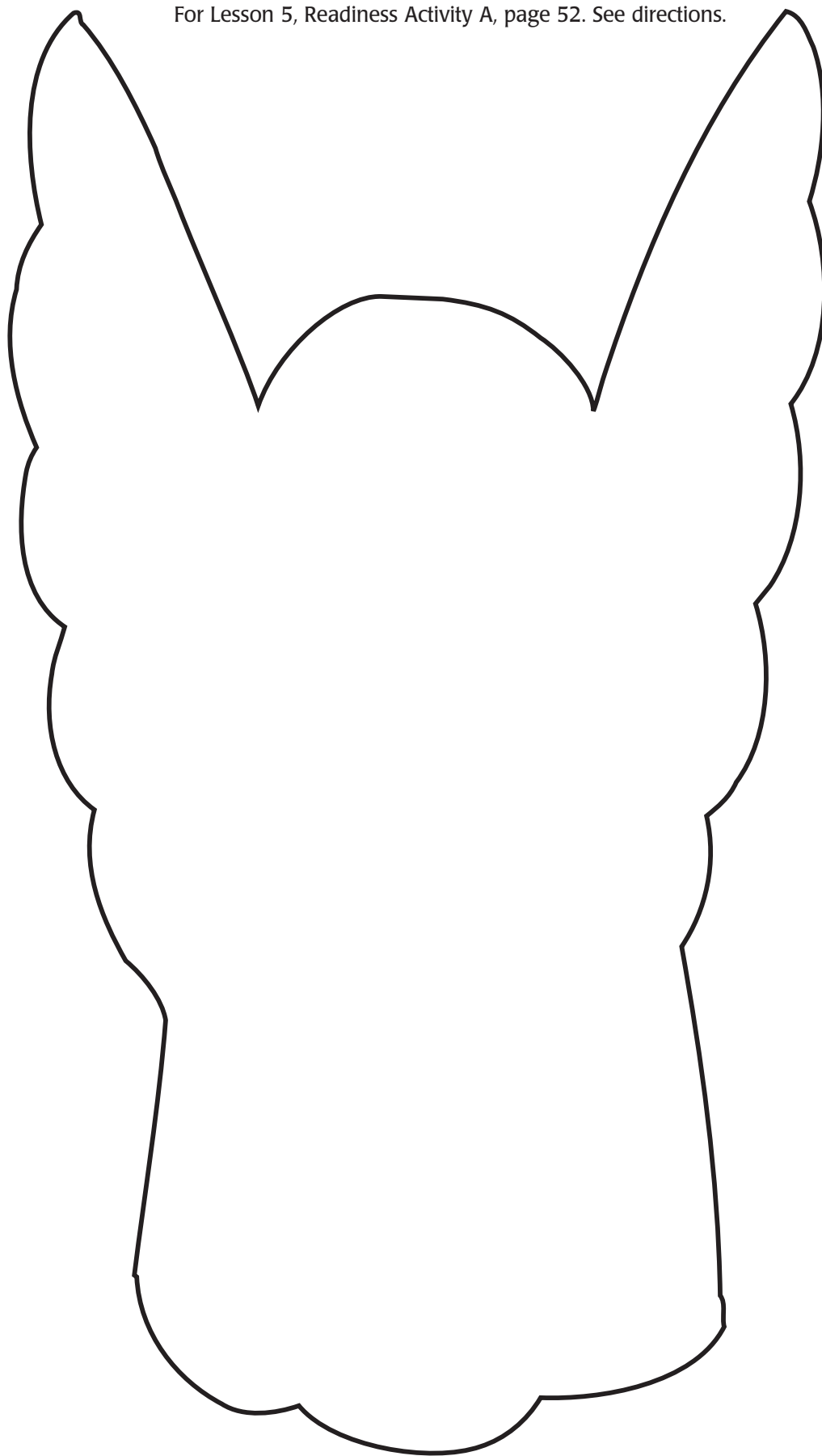


**BECAUSE OF GOD'S GRACE,
MY SINS ARE FORGIVEN
WHEN I ASK HIM.**

Closing

Sing "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139). Close with a prayer of thanks to God for His forgiveness and grace.

For Lesson 5, Readiness Activity A, page 52. See directions.



Forgiveness Fire

References

Isaiah 6; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 303-310

Memory Verse

"Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for" (Isaiah 6:7, NIV).

The Message

Because of God's grace, my sins are forgiven when I ask Him.

Have you ever had to tell someone something that you didn't want to tell them? Isaiah didn't think he was good enough to be God's messenger. God used an unusual way to encourage him.

One day Isaiah was visiting the temple. Suddenly he seemed to be standing in heaven in a dazzling room, looking toward God on His throne! Glittering rainbows, as though thrown from a gigantic diamond, danced across the space. God's royal robe draped down the platform of His throne and seemed to fill the room. A sacred altar to one side had bright-orange, burning coals with a drift of smoke rising from it. And what were those bright and shining creatures flying above God's head?

Isaiah studied the creatures. Angels! They were angels, called seraphim, with six wings! With two of their wings they covered their faces. They did not look at God because He was so holy. With two other wings they covered their feet—probably so they would not touch God. And with the remaining two wings, the angels were flying above God's head.

The whole room rang with the angels' beautiful music. It was so powerful, the doorposts shook. Isaiah's

whole body tingled. Soon, smoke from the altar filled the room. But Isaiah sensed it was not dangerous; it was holy. God's presence seemed to be a part of the smoke that surrounded Isaiah with warmth.

But what were the angels singing? Isaiah listened carefully. They were calling to one another, saying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (Isaiah 6:3, NIV).

When Isaiah realized where he was, he began to cry. "I don't belong here with God," he said. "I have said things I shouldn't have said. I live with people who aren't kind to each other all the time. And

I'm not always good to them. I'm not good enough to be with God. And yet, here I am! What is God going to do to me?"

As he stood there with his face upturned, he saw one of the seraphim fly to the altar.

The angel took some tongs and very carefully lifted a burn-

ing coal. Then the angel flew to Isaiah and touched his lips with the glowing coal. It didn't hurt, and it didn't burn. The angel said very gently, "See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away."

A wonderful sense of relief washed over Isaiah. His sins were gone! Before he could thank God for this blessing, God spoke to him. He spoke like a kind Father, concerned about His children because His children wouldn't listen to Him. God said, "Whom shall I send to take My messages to the people?"



Immediately, Isaiah said, "Here am I, Lord. Send me!" With renewed love for God, he was ready to be God's messenger. God didn't force Isaiah to be a prophet. He first showed His love to Isaiah; then He allowed Isaiah to volunteer.

This was the beginning. For more than 60 years Isaiah delivered God's messages to God's people.

God loved Isaiah just as he was. We call that love "grace." And because of God's grace Isaiah always chose to follow God. And God is still reaching out with love to each one of us. God offers us the same promise of forgiveness that He gave to Isaiah. If you believe Him and confess your sins as Isaiah did, the gift of forgiveness is yours. God is a Father who keeps His promises. He will always love you.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, look for creatures that have wings. Then read today's lesson story. What did you learn about winged creatures?
- Read and discuss Isaiah 6:7 together. What does "atone" mean? Who has atoned for your sins? How?
- Sing "For God So Loved the World" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 26). Thank God for sending Jesus to atone for your sins.

Sunday

- During family worship, read about the seraphim in Isaiah 6:2, 3. Each seraph had _____ wings. How many times did they call, "Holy"? _____
- Cut a paper shape of a piece of coal. Write the memory verse on it. Color it so it looks like a glowing coal. Teach the verse to your family.
- Share the "Forgiven" booklet you made in Sabbath School.

Monday

- Read and discuss Isaiah 6:1 with your family. Draw a picture of what you read.
- Isaiah's vision came while he was in God's house. Read Habakkuk 2:20 and tell what it means. How do you act in God's house? Is it a holy place? Ask God to help you remember that.
- Look at your "coal" memory verse reminder. Say the verse from memory.
- Sing "Holy, Holy, Holy" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 73) before prayer. Ask God to help you remember to be reverent in His church.

Tuesday

- Read and discuss Isaiah 6:5-7 with your family.
- Look in a book to learn three new things about coal. Tell your family about them.

- Say your memory verse. Check it with your "coal" memory verse reminder.
- Ask an adult to light a candle for you. Hold your hand near the flame. Do you feel the heat? Thank God for warmth.

Wednesday

- For family worship, read and discuss 1 John 1:9. Say your memory verse in your own words. Tell what it means to you.
- Help with the laundry today. Ask your family: How is God like a washing machine? Thank God for washing away your sins.

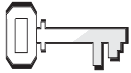
Thursday

- For worship, read Isaiah 6:8 out loud together. Then look at the list of Old Testament books in the front of your Bible. Find names of other prophets who shared God's messages.
- When you think of Bible prophets, you might picture older people who were wise. Who is the oldest person you know? Are they wise? Do they remind you that God planned for your salvation long, long ago? Ask God to make you wise.
- Say your memory verse together. Ask your family what it means to them.

Friday

- Dress up like Isaiah and tell how he saw God in the temple. Start by reading Isaiah 6:1. End by showing your family your forgiveness book and telling what it means to you.
- Sing "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13). Ask each person to tell about God's grace to them. Add new verses. For example: "He healed my mom." (Repeat three times:) "He's so good to me."
- Say your memory verse together. Then thank God for His goodness to you and your family.

More Time on the Clock



References

Isaiah 38:1-21; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 340-348



Memory Verse

"The Lord will do what he has promised" (Isaiah 38:7, NIV).

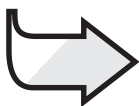


Objectives

The children will:
Know that God always keeps His promises.

Feel confident that God will do what He has promised.

Respond by trusting God to keep His promises and thanking Him for doing so.



The Message

God keeps His promises.

Monthly Theme

God keeps His promises.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

While Hezekiah is sick, God sends him a message by His prophet Isaiah, telling him he will soon die. Hezekiah prays, reminding God that he has been faithful. Then he weeps bitterly. God gives Isaiah another message for Hezekiah—that He had heard his prayer, had seen him weep, and would add 15 years to his life. God promises to turn the shadow on the sundial of Ahaz 10 degrees backward as a sign. God keeps His promise. Hezekiah recovers and writes a psalm (see Isaiah 38:9-20) in which he expresses his gratitude to God for answering his prayer.

This is a lesson about grace.

God's promise of extended life to Hezekiah was a gift of His grace—to Hezekiah, to Isaiah, and to us. He promises us eternal life, extended forever, not just for 15 years. Just as God kept His promise to Hezekiah long ago, He will keep His promises to us today.

Teacher Enrichment

Hezekiah's name means "Yahweh has strengthened." He was the son of Ahaz and the thirteenth king of Judah, reigning for 29 years. He was a good king who tried to follow God's law, repairing the temple and reinstituting the religious services. His reign was prosperous. His greatest technical accomplishment was cutting the Siloam tunnel (1,749 feet [533 meters]) to bring water into the city of Jerusalem. His miraculous healing was an opportunity for him to witness about God's grace to people of many countries. The Chaldean leader Merodach-baladan sent ambassadors to learn more about what happened (see *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 8, pp. 484-486).

Some confusion is possible since some Bible translations of Isaiah 38:8 refer to a sundial and other translations refer to steps. One possible interpretation of Isaiah 38:8 is as follows: "The sign of the return of the declining sun has an obvious appropriateness to the addition of years to the declining life of a man. . . . The sundial: Lit., 'the stairs' of Ahaz; not a sundial in our sense, but what served the purpose, viz., the steps of the 'king's entry,' presumably a private stairway, built by Ahaz (cf. II Kings 16:18) on the west

side of the temple enclosure, so that a horizontal shadow moved up the steps as the sun declined" (*The Interpreter's Bible*, vol. 5, pp. 373, 374).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	markers, sun cutouts (see p. 67), stapler or pins, bulletin board with words "Children of the SON"
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Shadow Drawing</i> B. <i>Rainbow Handprints</i>	Bible, large piece of paper for each child, pens, sunlight and shadow Bible, finger paints in the seven colors of the rainbow, large piece of paper (approx. 4' x 8' [1.25 m. x 2.5 m.]), baby wipes or wet paper towels
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> piece of pottery from last week with a rainbow-colored sign reading "God keeps His promises" none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	tape, large poster board circle, spotlight, "bed," two sets of Bible-times costumes, crown large rainbow drawing divided into seven colors Bibles, plastic soap dishes or small boxes for each child or paper for a book, markers, pencils, Bible references list, paper
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Promise Book</i>	paper, markers, stapler
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Sharing God's Promises</i>	paper, colored markers

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

You Need:

- markers
- sun cutouts (see p. 67)
- stapler or pins
- large bulletin board with the words “Children of the SON”

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week’s lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

As the children arrive, give them a sun cutout and marker. Have them write their names on the sun and pin or staple their sun to the bulletin board under the caption.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- large piece of paper for each child
- pens
- sunlight and shadow

A. Shadow Drawing

If there are shadows, tell the children to choose one and place their paper on the ground or floor so that the shadow is on the paper. They then draw around the outline of the shadow. (If necessary, use a strong lamp to create shadows.)

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy tracing around a shadow?** (yes, no) **When you get home today, mark where an outdoor shadow falls. Check your mark and the shadow at different times of the day. Notice what happens. Let’s find and read Isaiah 38:7, our memory verse. Read aloud together. Shadows change the shape of things; they get longer or shorter. Today we will learn about one thing that never changes—God’s promises. We’re learning that:**



GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- finger paints in the seven colors of the rainbow
- large piece of paper (approx. 4' x 8' [1.25 m. x 2.5 m.])
- baby wipes or wet paper towels

B. Rainbow Handprints

In advance, make an outline of a rainbow (seven arcs or semicircles, one inside the other) on a large piece of paper. Make each of the seven semicircles the width of a child’s hand.

Starting at the top semicircle, the children should each place a hand first in the red paint and then press it on the paper, staying within the top semicircle. When the red section is filled with handprints, begin filling the orange section. This activity will be completed in the following weeks. (The order of the rainbow spectrum is red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.) When finished, have the children use baby wipes or wet paper towels to clean their hands. NOTE: Save the rainbow for Lesson 7.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **What did you like most about working on our rainbow? What Bible story tells about a rainbow? What did that rainbow mean to the people who saw it? What does it mean to God’s people today? The rainbow is a symbol of God keeping His promises. Read Genesis 9:13. A covenant is a type of promise. Each time we see a rainbow, we remember that God always**



does what He promises. Let's find and read our memory verse in Isaiah 38:7.
Read aloud together. In our Bible story today we are learning about another
time God made a promise. Today's message is:



GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)
- "Jesus Keeps His Promises" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 41)
- "In His Time" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 42)
- "All Through the Day" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 49)
- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **With our offering today
we can thank God for keeping His
promises.**

You Need:

- piece of pottery from last week with a rainbow colored sign reading "God keeps His promises."



Prayer

Read a few of your favorite Bible promises to the children. Ask for prayer requests. Try to find appropriate Bible promises to match some of the requests. Then pray together for the requests and thank God for His precious promises.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- tape
- large poster board circle
- spotlight
- “bed”
- two sets of Bible-times costumes
- crown

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Hezekiah, Isaiah

Note: Since some Bible translations refer to “steps” as a way to measure the shadow created by the movement of the sun throughout the day, and other translations refer to a “sundial,” it would probably be less confusing to make the visual aid to conform to whatever translation you are using (see Teacher Enrichment).

In advance, prepare stairs going up the classroom wall, using adhesive or masking tape to “draw” stairs ascending the wall. Prepare a bed for Hezekiah. Select two boys or two men to be Hezekiah and Isaiah and have them dress in Bible-times costumes.

Read or tell the story.

[King Hezekiah is lying in bed.] King Hezekiah was helpless for maybe the first time in his life. As king, he was used to being able to make up the rules. But now he was sick. He might die. And there wasn’t anything he could do about it. Only God could do something. Only God could perform a miracle.

King Hezekiah tossed and turned. *[King Hezekiah tosses and turns, holding his head.]* What was going to happen now? Would he get well?

God loved Hezekiah and knew that he had some questions. So He sent the prophet Isaiah to talk to him. *[Isaiah comes to Hezekiah’s bed.]* Isaiah had news that the king did not want to hear. *[Isaiah points his finger to heaven and looks like he is speaking to Hezekiah.]* He told the king as gently as he could, “This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order,

because you are going to die; you will not recover” (Isaiah 38:1, NIV). And then Isaiah left the palace. *[Isaiah leaves.]*

King Hezekiah turned his face away from his servants and faced the wall. *[Hezekiah faces the wall and begins to “cry.”]* He began to cry with such loud sobs that everyone nearby in the palace could hear him. The servants were frightened. They wanted to help, but they couldn’t.

But in his most helpless moment, the king turned to God. *[Hezekiah appears to be praying.]* He reviewed his life of following God. “Remember . . . how I have walked before you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion,” Hezekiah said (Isaiah 38:3, NIV). He started crying again. *[Hezekiah “cries” again.]*

God took pity on Hezekiah. He sent Isaiah back with a new message. *[Isaiah goes back to see Hezekiah.]*

[Isaiah points toward heaven and appears to talk to Hezekiah.] Isaiah said, “This is what the Lord . . . says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. . . . This is the Lord’s sign to you that the Lord will do what he has promised: I will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz” (Isaiah 38:5-7, NIV). *[Using the spotlight and large cardboard circle, cause the shadow of the sun to move up the “stairs.” Then reverse it. Or illustrate with a sundial.]*

Then Isaiah told the servants about a treatment to give King Hezekiah. They did, and he got better (Isaiah 38:21). *[Hezekiah gets out of bed and stands up.]* Hezekiah lived another 15 years and continued to serve God.

Later, when Hezekiah wrote about this miracle, he said that his gift to God for being healed would be to tell the story to his children and praise God for His faithfulness. *[Hezekiah smiles and*

points to heaven.] He said with confidence, "The Lord will save me, and we will sing with stringed instruments all the days of our lives in the temple of the Lord" (Isaiah 38:20, NIV).

Not everyone experiences a miracle as King Hezekiah did. Many people still die from being sick. God is sad when we suffer. He has promised to send Jesus back to take us to heaven, where we will live forever with Him. And no one will get sick or die! We can believe that promise because God keeps all His promises, as He did for Hezekiah.

Debriefing

Ask: **What would you think if the sun went down in the east instead of the west? Or if it backed up, as it did in Hezekiah's time?** (I'd be very surprised and amazed. I would believe that it was a miracle.)

Say: **This miracle shows again that God is very powerful. It also proved that He would keep His promise to Hezekiah. When you feel worried about something in your life, what will you remember?** (I can trust God to take care of all my needs, because He has promised that He would do that.) **Let's say today's message like we really believe it!**



GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

Memory Verse

In advance, cut a rainbow drawing into seven separate colors. Divide the memory verse into seven parts and write each part on one color of the rainbow: red—**The Lord**; orange—**will do**; yellow—**what**; green—**He**; blue—**has**; indigo—**promised**; violet—**Isaiah 38:7**. Let the children assemble the rainbow to discover the

You Need:

- large rainbow drawing divided into seven colors

verse. Mix the colors and repeat the activity. Do this until the children know the verse.

Bible Study

On paper, create a list of promises about healing. (Include some references from Isaiah 38:1-20. Some other promises about healing include: Jeremiah 30:17; Malachi 4:2; Isaiah 53:5; Exodus 15:26; Revelation 21:4.) Repeat the verses until you have enough to give one to each of your students.

Cut the list into strips containing one Bible promise text each. Give one to each child, asking for a volunteer to read each text. (Adults assist as needed.) Discuss the meaning of each. Then have students get an adult to help them write out their verse on a slip of paper and put it in the box you have provided (or place it in a small book they create). They may do this at home also and bring it back next week. During Bible study time for the next three weeks they will continue to add to their box or book. Keep the boxes/books until the last Sabbath of the month.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think about the promises God has given us?** (encouraging, take away my worry, etc.) **The promises we read today are about healing. That's what God did for Hezekiah.**

Say: **Sometimes we need healing from other things besides being sick in our bodies. What are some of these "other things"?** (sin, people's words and actions that hurt us, our own bad feelings about someone or something, etc.)

When you are sick or worried, remember God's promises. They are for you, and they are true. Let's say today's message again:



GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

You Need:

- Bibles
- plastic soap dishes or small boxes for each child or paper for a book
- markers, pencils
- Bible references list
- small pieces of paper

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- markers
- stapler

Promise Book

Give the children an opportunity to make a “promise” book. Ask them: **What promises has God made to you that He has kept?**

If someone has difficulty, remind them that God promised to watch over them, protect them, and provide their every need. Encourage them to think of things God provides that they don’t think of as miracles: food, parents, fresh air, water, animals, plants, etc.

Make a small book by stapling sheets of paper together. Help the children draw the representation of a promise on each

page and decorate the pages. Encourage the children to place themselves in their drawings.

Debriefing

Say: **God has given us hundreds of promises in His Word, and He keeps every one. It is exciting to see what God will do next.**

Ask: **What would you rather do—worry or believe God’s promises?** (Believe God’s promises.) **Why?** (Because worrying doesn’t help. I can depend on God to keep His promises.)

Remember our message:



GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- colored markers

Sharing God’s Promises

Ask: **Can you think of someone whom you might remind about one of God’s promises—so they can look forward to it coming true? As you think of that person, say a prayer that Jesus will help you find just the right promise in His Word to share with them.**

What about one of the promises that you read during Bible study time? (If needed, list those texts where all can see.) **Or you can use another. Write it on a piece of paper using different color markers, like a rainbow.**

Say: **Be sure to write the person’s name in the verse so they will know Jesus is speaking especially to them.** Adults assist as needed, especially for younger children.

Debriefing

Invite the children to share aloud some of the Bible promises that they chose.

Ask: **How do you like the idea of sharing God’s promises with someone else?** (I like to make others feel better, etc.) **Don’t forget to tell your friend about today’s message. Let’s say it together one last time.**

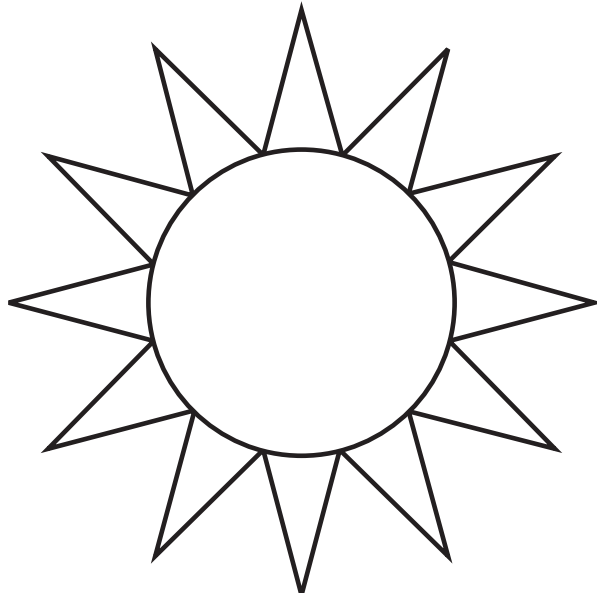
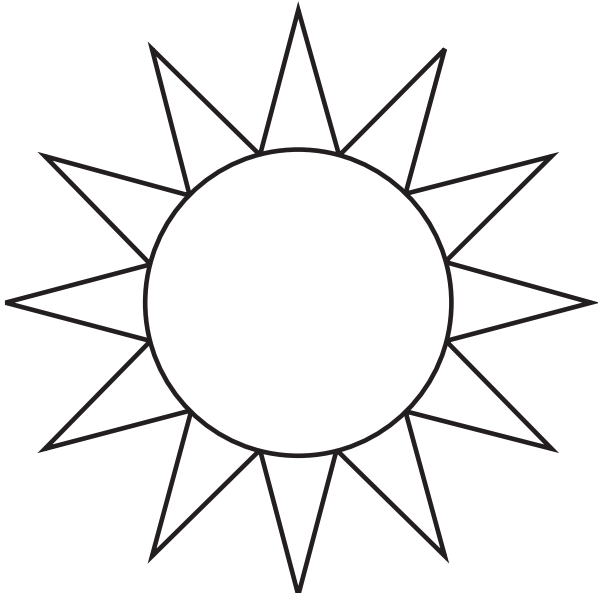
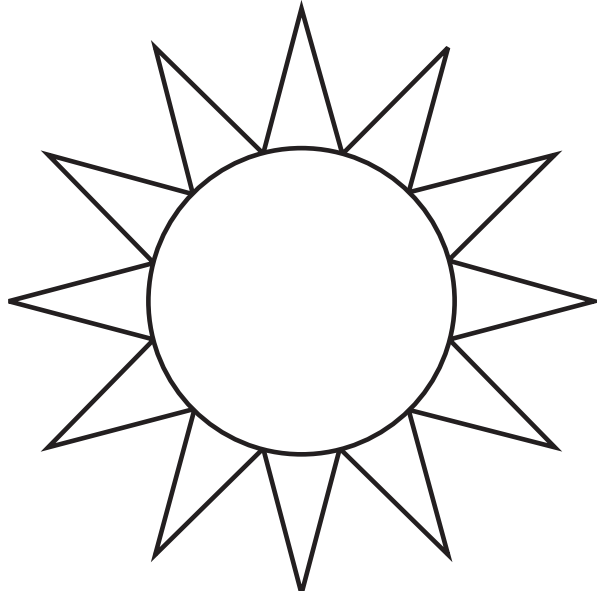
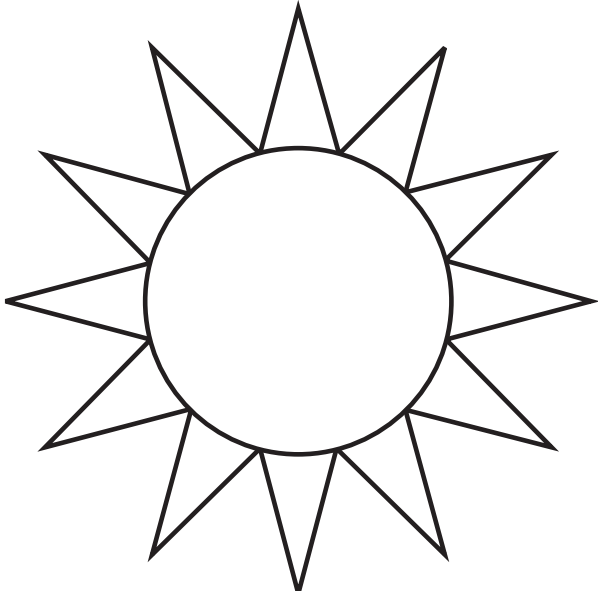
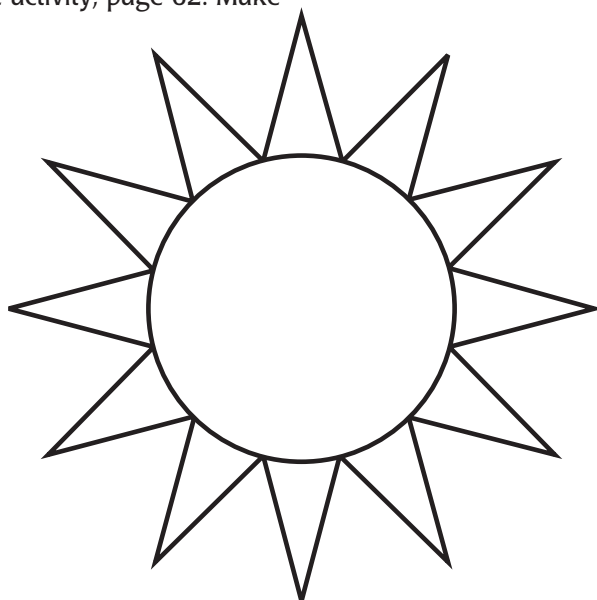
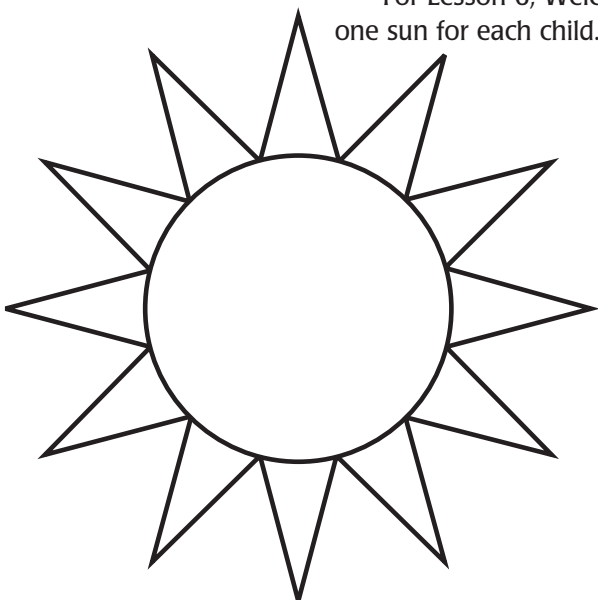


GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES.

Closing

Sing “He’s Able” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40). Pray that God will help every boy and girl to depend on God and His promises.

For Lesson 6, Welcome activity, page 62. Make
one sun for each child.



More Time on the Clock

References

Isaiah 38:1-21;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 340-348

Memory Verse

"The Lord will
do what he has
promised"
(Isaiah 38:7, NIV).

The Message

God keeps His
promises.

Kari was sick, so sick she didn't think she would ever get well. Day after day she felt awful. And day after day she prayed that God would make her well. God heard her prayers, and she got better.

Kari learned that God answers prayer. King Hezekiah learned that too.

King Hezekiah was helpless. He didn't like the feeling. He was used to being in charge of his life, but now he was very sick.

In his bedroom King Hezekiah tossed and turned feverishly. His head ached, and his body probably felt sore all over. He thought about his life. He had been a good king. He had obeyed God and been faithful. He had done what the prophets had told him to do. What would happen to him now?

God knew that the king was a good man. He knew that the king had some questions. So He sent the prophet Isaiah to talk to him. Isaiah had news that the king did not want to hear. He told the king as gently as he could, "This is what the Lord says: Put your house in order, because you are going to die; you will not recover" (Isaiah 38:1, NIV). And then Isaiah left. Being a messenger of God wasn't always pleasant.

King Hezekiah turned his face away from his servants and faced his bedroom wall. He began to cry with loud sobs. Everyone nearby could hear him. Clearly, his heart was broken, and he was afraid. The servants, too, were frightened. They wanted to help, but they did not know how.

In his most helpless moment the king turned to God and reviewed his life. "Remember how I have followed You faithfully and with wholehearted



devotion," Hezekiah said. "I have done what is good in Your eyes." He started crying again.

God took pity on Hezekiah. He sent Isaiah back to the king with a new message. Isaiah said, "This is what the Lord . . . says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will add fifteen years to your life. . . . This is the Lord's sign to you that the Lord will do what he has promised: He will make the shadow cast by the sun go back the ten steps it has gone down on the stairway of Ahaz" (Isaiah 38:5-7, NIV). The shadow would move backward!

Then Isaiah told the servants how to care for Hezekiah. And they did as Isaiah said (Isaiah 38:21). Hezekiah lived another 15 years and continued to serve God.

Hezekiah wrote about this miracle. You can read his words in Isaiah 38. He praised God for being healed and promised to tell his story to his children. He promised to praise God for His faithfulness. He said with confidence, "The Lord will save me, and we will sing with stringed instruments all the days of our lives in the temple of the Lord" (Isaiah 38:20, NIV).

Not everyone experiences a miracle as King Hezekiah did. People still die from being sick. But there is hope. God has promised to send Jesus to take us to heaven. When He comes, those who

have been faithful will be resurrected. In heaven we will live forever with Jesus. And no one will get sick or die! We can believe that promise because God keeps all His promises, just as He did for Hezekiah.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Take a Sabbath walk with your family in the sunshine, if possible. Look for shadows. Stop some place and read your lesson story. Your story has sun and shadows too. At the end of your walk look at the shadows again. How have the shadows changed?
- Read and discuss Isaiah 38:7 together.
- Sing "All Through the Day" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 49) before prayer. Thank God for sunshine.

Sunday

- Read and discuss Isaiah 38:1-3 during worship. How might you have felt if Isaiah had given this message to you? What two things did Hezekiah do? Does your family pray when you are in trouble?
- Ask each family member what their favorite Bible promise is and why. Make a list of these texts. During the week, make a decorated bookmark for each person with their special promise. Save the bookmarks for Friday worship.
- Say your memory verse together. Then thank God for His promises.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Isaiah 38:4-6.
- Draw a picture of a time you were in trouble and God heard your prayer for help. Draw His answer to your prayer. Explain your picture to your family.
- Write this week's memory verse; then write above it "God's promise to (your name)."
- Thank God for hearing and answering your prayers.

Tuesday

- During family worship, read and discuss Isaiah 38:7, 8.
- How does the sun's shadow tell time? Stand a pencil in firm dirt or a lump of clay. Use a flashlight as the "sun." Make the flashlight's beam "rise" from below one side of the pencil to climb

to "midday" and then slowly "set" on the other side. Notice changes in the pencil's shadow. Make the flashlight beam go back to see the "sun" going backward. Watch the shadow.

- Say your memory verse. Then work on your promise bookmarks.
- Thank God for light and darkness.

Wednesday

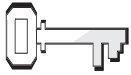
- Together with your family, read and discuss the first part of Hezekiah's song in Isaiah 38:9-14. Is this the sad part?
- Sing a happy song about God's promises: "Jesus Keeps His Promises" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 41). Then pray for someone who is sick.
- Make up a happy tune for your memory verse. Work on your promise bookmarks.

Thursday

- Read and discuss Isaiah 38:15-20 with your family.
- God added some time to Hezekiah's life. What would you do with extra hours today?
- Have you shared one of God's promises with a friend? (If you were not in Sabbath School, write on a card with markers of different colors one of God's promises and share it with a friend.)
- Sing your memory verse song. Thank God for health and strength. Then finish your promise bookmarks.

Friday

- Set a full, clear glass of water on a windowsill in bright sunlight. Be sure the glass sticks out over the ledge a little bit. Place a white piece of paper on the floor under the window. What do you see on the paper? Does it remind you of God's love?
- Act out the story of Hezekiah with your family. Make the shadow with a flashlight.
- Give your family the promise bookmarks you made. Have them read their promise out loud and tell what it means to them.
- Sing your memory verse together. Then thank God for another Sabbath.



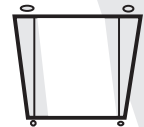
References

Jeremiah 18:1-6;
The Ministry of Healing,
pp. 471, 472



Memory Verse

"[O Lord], we are the
clay, you are the
potter; we are all the
work of your hand"
(Isaiah 64:8, NIV).



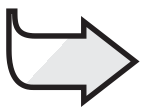
Objectives

The children will:

Know that God has a
plan for their future.

Feel safe and comfortable
in God's hands.

Respond by trusting God
and allowing Him to shape
them as He sees best.



The Message

God holds me in His
hands and molds me.

Jars of Clay

Monthly Theme

God keeps His promises.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

God tells Jeremiah to visit a potter who is working at the wheel. The potter is making a clay jar. It has a defect, and the potter makes it again. God tells Jeremiah that Israel is in His (God's) hand, and that He has power to reshape the nation to conform to His will.

This is a lesson about grace.

Even though we are marred by sin, God has promised to mold us, to make us into His image, to change our lives to conform to His will, if we are pliable in His hands. He begins before we are born and continues to shape us throughout our lifetime, making us into valuable vessels.

Teacher Enrichment

The parable of the potter, "probably written during the early years of Jehoiakim's reign, illustrate[s] God's sovereignty over the nation. God has power over the clay (Judah), and he continues to work with it to make it a useful vessel. But Judah must soon repent, or the clay will harden the wrong way. Then it will be worth nothing and will be broken and destroyed.

"As the potter molded or shaped a clay pot on the potter's wheel, defects often appeared. The potter had power over the clay, to permit the defects or to reshape the pot. Likewise, God had power to reshape the nation to conform to his purposes. Our strategy is not to become mindless and passive—one aspect of clay—but to be willing and receptive to God's impact on us. As we yield to God, he begins reshaping us into valuable vessels" (*Life Application Study Bible*, Notes and Bible Helps on Jeremiah 18:1-6 [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005], p. 1224).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. Your Name in Dough</i> <i>B. Rainbow Handprints</i> <i>C. Clay in Your Hand</i>	Bibles, salt dough (see activity, p. 72), pencils, large piece of waxed paper, rolling pins yellow and green finger paints, rain- bow wall banner started in Lesson 6, baby wipes or wet paper towels Bibles, modeling clay, plastic place mats or waxed paper
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbooks Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy, The SDA Hymnal</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> piece of pottery from last week with a sign reading "Mold me, Lord!" none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	several pieces of clay pottery; pic- ture of potter's wheel (if possible, a real potter's wheel; small ones available in most large craft stores, optional); clump of pottery clay, modeling clay, or salt dough from Readiness A; plastic place mats or waxed paper today's memory verse written for all to see, paper, pencils, thin markers/ chalk, white/chalkboard Bibles, plastic soap dishes or small boxes for each child or paper for a book, markers, pencils, small pieces of paper
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>What Am I?</i>	piece of pottery (plate or cup); hard, dry clay; soft clay; plastic place mats or waxed paper
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Something Special</i>	clay or salt dough object for each child (see Applying the Lesson, p. 76), sealable plastic bags

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- salt dough (see recipe)
- pencils
- large piece of waxed paper
- rolling pins

A. Your Name in Dough

Recipe for Salt Dough

4 cups of flour; 2 cups of salt; 2 cups of water; 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil; 4 teaspoons of cream of tartar; few drops of food coloring

Method: Mix flour, salt, and cream of tartar. In separate container add food coloring and oil to water. Add liquid to flour and salt mixture. Cook over low heat until very stiff. Knead on floured surface. Dough can be stored in a plastic container. Refrigerate.

Prepare salt dough in advance. Give each child a lump. Have them roll out their piece of dough on waxed paper and make two holes so they can hang the plaque when it is dry. Have them use a pencil to imprint their name. When the dough hardens, display the plaques as part of your room decor.

Debriefing

Say: **God loves you so much. Just as you wrote your name in the dough, God has promised to engrave or keep you on the palms of His hands (Isaiah 49:16). What does Jesus have on His hands that shows His forever love for you? (nail-prints—see John 15:13; 20:25.) Imagine Him holding you in His hands and molding (making, shaping) you more and more like Himself. Let's read our memory verse, Isaiah 64:8. Read aloud together. Today's message is:**



GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS AND MOLDS ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- yellow and green finger paints
- rainbow wall banner started in Lesson 6
- baby wipes or wet paper towels

B. Rainbow Handprints

Continue creating the "rainbow handprints" wall banner that you started earlier. (See Lesson 6.) Work with yellow and then the green. Next week they will finish with blue, indigo, and violet (or just blue and violet, if you prefer).

Debriefing

Ask: **Are you enjoying making the rainbow wall banner? (yes) How does this remind you of God's promises? (God made a rainbow when He promised Noah that He would never again destroy the whole world with a flood.) The hands on our rainbow handprint banner remind us of our message:**



GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS AND MOLDS ME.

Say that with me.

C. Clay in Your Hand

Allow the children a few minutes to make pots, cups, etc., from the clay. Remind them to keep the clay on the plastic place mats or waxed paper.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you enjoy making things with clay?** (yes) **Do you like soft or hard clay?** (soft clay) **Why?** (Soft clay is easier to work with. If the thing I am making isn't right, I can make it over again.) **Our Bible story today is about clay in the hands of a man who makes pots—a potter. Let's read our memory verse, Isaiah 64:8.** Have the text read aloud. **In other words we could say with today's message that:**



GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS AND MOLDS ME.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- modeling clay
- plastic place mats or waxed paper

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Have Thine Own Way, Lord" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 567)

"Right Now" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 123)

"I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124)

"Teach Me, Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 110)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **We are collecting our offering with a piece of pottery. In our Bible story for today, pottery was made beautiful in the hand of a potter. When we give our offerings, it's like placing them in God's hands, and He does something beautiful with them.**

You Need:

- piece of pottery from last week with a sign reading "Mold me, Lord!"



Prayer

Kneel together and sing the first verse of "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 567) as a prayer. Invite each child silently to give Jesus permission to mold specific things in their lives so they can live according to God's will. Close by singing together the fourth verse.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- several pieces of clay pottery
- picture of potter's wheel (if possible, a real potter's wheel)
- clump of pottery clay, modeling clay, or salt dough from Readiness A
- plastic place mats or waxed paper

Experiencing the Story

If available, set up the potter's wheel in advance. Distribute the pottery clay, modeling clay, or salt dough. Give each child a portion. As you tell the story, let the children make something out of the clay/dough. They might try braiding the clay or making a simple cup.

Read or tell the story.

The skilled artist drew out his knife and cut a slab of clay from the large lump. He slapped it on his potter's wheel and sat down. *[If available, demonstrate with the potter's wheel. If unavailable, show a picture and go through the motions.]*

Then he spun the wheel as he formed the clay. In the potter's hands the clay seemed to take on a life of its own. Once flat, it now had a hollow center and smooth, pale sides. The potter dipped his hands quickly in a basin of water and returned to his work. Almost lovingly, his hands put pressure on the days, and the shape responded instantly. Rounded sides began to narrow to a long neck. A lip was formed in the front. Then the potter's wheel slowed and came to a stop.

The potter braided some smooth pieces together and fastened them firmly onto one side of the pot to make a handle. Once again he took his knife, and this time he slid his creation off the wheel, setting it carefully on the drying shelf. What was once a slab of clay had become a beautiful clay pitcher with a braided handle.

But the potter kept working. His fresh batch of clay wouldn't last long.

He cut another slab from the batch, and as he had done before, he slapped it onto his potter's wheel. Round and

round, and up and down. As the sides of a waterpot rose between his hands, his attention was drawn to a man watching him. The potter looked up and smiled. But in that instant the sides of the pot fell into the center and the spinning wheel came to a stop.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," the man said as his hand flew to his mouth.

"Think nothing of it," said the potter. "I'll fix it in no time."

The visitor introduced himself. "My name is Jeremiah, and I was sent here by God to watch you work."

The potter seemed interested. "The beauty of clay," he said, "is that if it is too thin in one spot, or if I find mistakes as I go along, I just pinch out the problem or pat down the lump and start over. Sometimes that makes it even stronger than before. I always try to make the clay into what it seems best for."

"So mistakes can be fixed?" Jeremiah asked.

"Yes. I can shape and reshape the clay until it's just what it should be. When I'm happy with it, others will find it beautiful and useful too."

Jeremiah nodded. "Your work is beautiful," he said. He admired the objects on display. There were small oil lamps for a bedroom; pitchers of all sizes for cream, milk, or water; huge pots that came up to his waist for storing olives or grain, or for cooling water.

Everything was made from the same material, by the same creator, and yet each one was a little bit different. Each one had a special purpose. This was the lesson God wanted Jeremiah to learn by watching the potter at work. Now Jeremiah could explain how God shapes each person's life, dealing with the mistakes that happen and using them to form something beautiful.

In God's hands every life can be of service to others.

Debriefing

Ask: **How does the clay feel in your hands?** (soft, nice) **Do you enjoy making things out of clay?** (yes) Invite the children to show what they made as you were telling the story.

How do you think God feels as He holds us in His hands and makes us into something really special? (He enjoys it too.)

Now hold up one piece of the pottery that you have on display. Ask: **What is each piece of pottery used for?** (drinking, eating, storing, serving, etc.) **Which piece is most important?** (They are all important, depending on what you want to do.) **The cup is the most important if you need a drink, the bowl is the most important if you want to eat something, etc.**

It is the same way with us. Jesus made us all for a special purpose and we are all equally valuable. Always remember our message:



GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS AND MOLDS ME.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Have the children trace their own hand on the paper and copy the memory verse on the traced hand. Have each child read their verse, then say the verse together. "[O Lord], we are the clay, you are the pot-

You Need:

- memory verse written for all to see
- paper
- white/chalk-board
- pencils, thin markers, chalk

ter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8, NIV). Repeat until the children know the verse.

Bible Study

Have six children take turns reading the verses of Jeremiah 18:1-6, one verse per child. Ask them to find any promises from God in this passage (for example, verse 6). Then they write the promise on a small piece of paper and put the promise into their box or book. During Bible study time next week they will continue to add God's promises to their box or book. Keep the boxes/books until the last Sabbath of the month.

As time allows, have the children read other Bible verses that refer to clay, such as:

Isaiah 29:16
Isaiah 45:9
Lamentations 4:2
Romans 9:21
2 Timothy 2:20

Talk about what these verses mean.

You Need:

- Bibles
- plastic soap dishes or small boxes for each child or paper for a book
- markers, pencils, etc.
- small pieces of paper

Debriefing

Say: **Last week's Bible promises were about healing. This week's Bible promise is about what?** (We are in God's hands, and He will shape us like the potter shapes clay.)

Ask: **Why would you want God to shape you?** (He knows best how my life should look.)

If you ever worry about what will happen to your life, what will you remember? Let's answer with today's message:



GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS AND MOLDS ME.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- piece of inexpensive pottery (plate or cup)
- hard, dry clay
- soft clay
- plastic place mats or waxed paper

What Am I?

Break a pottery plate or cup and then ask the children to try to put it back together.

Ask them to make a cup from the hard, dry clay, and then ask them to make one from the soft, moist clay.

Note: Keep the soft clay item for the next activity.

Debriefing

Ask: **Which is easier to work with?** (soft clay) **How was it with hard, dry clay?** (It was hard to work with.) **What was it like to make something with the soft, new clay?** (Much easier to make something beautiful.)

How are we like these different types of clay? Share the following ideas:

The hard plate or cup. Determined to be what we want to be, stubborn, headstrong, independent, feeling as though we know more than God.

The hard, dry clay. Not really caring; not wanting to listen to my parents; refusing to study, pray, or listen to what God wants me to learn.

The soft clay. Praying, praising, listening for God's voice; spending more time seeking God's plan for my life than I spend trying to get what I want. Willing for God to make me what He wants me to be instead of what I think I want to be.

Which kind of clay do you want to be in God's hands? (soft clay) **Remember our message:**



GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS AND MOLDS ME.

Say that with me.

Note: Go directly to the next activity.

Sharing the Lesson

Something Special

Have each child show what they made in the previous activity. Suggest that they plan to use it to remind someone else that Jesus is the potter and wants to make each one of us into something really special.

Have the children put what they made in a sealable plastic bag and take it home.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy working with clay and making something beautiful?** (yes)

How do you think God feels when He works on you? (sometimes happy, sometimes sad, etc.)

Have you thought of the person

you will share this with? What will you say?

Encourage each child to say a quiet prayer, dedicating his or her life to God and asking God to make them what He wants them to be. Also pray for the people who will receive the cups or plaques that they will want to be what God wants them to be.

Let's close by saying our message:



**GOD HOLDS ME IN HIS HANDS
AND MOLDS ME.**

Closing

Sing again verse 1 of "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 567) as the closing prayer.

Remind the children to use their Bible study guide every day and to do the daily activities.

You Need:

- clay or dough object for each child made in Applying the Lesson
- sealable plastic bags

Jars of Clay

References

Jeremiah 18:1-6;
*The Ministry of
 Healing*,
 pp. 471, 472

Memory Verse

"[O Lord], we are
 the clay, you are
 the potter; we are
 all the work of
 your hand" (Isaiah
 64:8, NIV).

The Message

God holds me in
 His hands and
 molds me.

Sammy loved to make things from clay or play dough. It was very soft and it felt so good. He made animals, buildings, cars, people, and cups. The clay in Sammy's hands became whatever Sammy wanted.

A man in the Bible enjoyed working with clay too. Perhaps it happened like this . . .

Lifting the corner of a wet cloth, the skilled artist cut a slab of clay from the large lump. He slapped it on his potter's wheel and sat down. He pulled his robe up to his knees. Then slowly he begins to turn his wheel and form the clay.

Underneath the potter's hands the clay seemed to take on a life of its own. Once flat, it now had a hollow center and smooth, pale sides. The potter dipped his hands quickly in a basin of water and returned to his work. Almost lovingly, his hands put pressure on the clay, and the shape responded instantly. Rounded sides began to narrow to a long neck. A lip was formed in the front. Then the potter's wheel slowed and came to a stop.

The potter braided some smooth pieces of clay together. He fastened them firmly onto one side of the pot to make a handle. With a happy smile he slid his creation off the wheel, setting it carefully on the drying shelf. What was once a slab of clay had become a beautiful clay pitcher.

The potter looked out at the busy street. Customers stood nearby watch-

ing him work. Some bought clay pots for water or flour. But the potter kept working. His fresh batch of clay wouldn't last long.

He cut another slab from the batch. As he had done before, he slapped it onto his potter's wheel. Round and round, and up and down. As the sides of a waterpot rose between his hands, his attention was drawn to a man watching him. The potter looked up and smiled. But in that instant the sides of the pot fell into the center and the spinning wheel came to a stop.

"Oh, I'm so sorry," the man said as his hand flew to his mouth.

The potter waved his hand in the air. "Think nothing of it," he said. "I'll fix it in no time."

The man introduced himself. "My name is Jeremiah. I was sent here by God to watch you work."

The potter seemed interested. "The beauty of clay," he said, "is that if it is too thin in one spot, or if I find mistakes as I go along, I just pinch out the problem or pat down the lump and start over.

Sometimes that makes it even stronger than before. I always try to make the clay into what it seems best for."

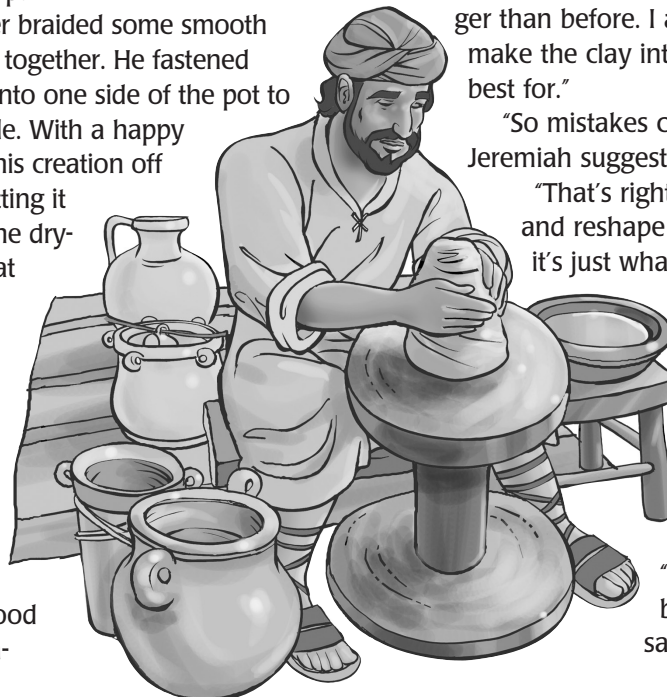
"So mistakes can be fixed," Jeremiah suggested.

"That's right. I can shape and reshape the clay until it's just what it should be.

When I'm happy with it, others will find it beautiful and useful too."

Jeremiah nodded.

"Your work is beautiful," he said. He stood and



watched the potter for a few minutes longer. Then he admired the objects on display once more. There were small oil lamps for a bedroom; pitchers of all sizes for cream, milk, or water; huge pots for storing olives or grain, or for cooling water. Everything was made from the same material, by the same creator. Yet each was a little different. Each one had a special purpose.

This was the lesson God wanted Jeremiah to learn. That was why He had sent Jeremiah to watch the potter at work. Now Jeremiah could explain how God shapes each person's life, how He corrects the mistakes that happen and uses them to form something beautiful. In God's hands every life can be of service to others.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Take a walk with your family. Look for beautiful things God has made.
- Read your Bible lesson story together. Then read and discuss Isaiah 64:8.
- Sing "I Want to Be" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 124) before prayer.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss Jeremiah 18:1-4. Ask someone to help you find and read about clay in an encyclopedia or on the internet with supervision. Tell three things you learned.
- Look around your house. How many things are made of clay? Thank God for them.

Monday

- Read and discuss Jeremiah 18:5, 6 with your family.
- Trace around your hand with a pencil onto paper. Write the words of your memory verse in different colors on the hand tracing. Read the verse out loud. Read your name instead of "we." Then put the name of each family member in the verse and read it to them.

Tuesday

- Together with your family, read Lamentations 4:2. What does this verse mean to you?
- Make a pinch pot from clay or play dough. Here's how: Knead the clay to make it soft. Form the clay into a ball. Push one thumb into the center, but not through it. Cup one hand under the clay and use the other to pinch the clay as you turn it. The opening will get larger and larger. Carefully scratch a design on the side. Let your pot dry.
- Ask God to continue to mold and shape your life according to His will.

Wednesday

- With your family, read Jesus' prayer about letting God mold Him in Matthew 26:42. When did He pray this prayer?
- In Sabbath School you made something to share with someone. Share it today. (Or make a picture of a clay cup or plaque.) As you give it away, remind that person that Jesus is the potter and wants to make each of us into something really special. Pray for that person today.
- Say your memory verse from memory.
- Sing "Right Now" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 123) with your family.

Thursday

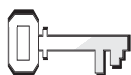
- With help, draw and color a rainbow on a paper plate.* Draw five small clouds on white paper and cut them out. Write one of the following on each cloud: (1) God keeps His promises; (2) Acts 1:11; (3) Psalm 91:11; (4) Malachi 3:6; (5) Psalm 50:15. Attach the clouds to the paper plate so they hang from the bottom of the rainbow. Hang it where all can see. During family worship, read the promises and tell what they mean to you.
- Thank God for all His promises.

Friday

- Tell your lesson story to your family during worship time. Show the pinch pot you made this week.
- How should we respond when God wants to mold us? Sing together "Have Thine Own Way, Lord" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 567). Then say your memory verse together as a prayer.

* The order of the rainbow spectrum is red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet.

Nehemiah—God's Builder



References

Nehemiah 1-4; 6;
Prophets and Kings,
pp. 628-645, 653-660



Memory Verse

"The gracious hand of
my God was on me"
(Nehemiah 2:8, NIV).

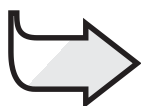


Objectives

The children will:
Know that through
His grace, God
empowers them to do
what He asks of them.

Feel confident that they can
follow God through the
power of His grace.

Respond by committing
themselves always to do
God's will through His power.



The Message

God gives me the
grace and power
to do His will.

Monthly Theme

God keeps His promises.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Nehemiah, a Hebrew exile serving in the Persian court, hears about the hardships of the exiles who have returned to Jerusalem. He prays to God, who gives him the idea of going himself to help rebuild the walls and gates. King Artaxerxes sees Nehemiah's sadness and asks about it. God helps Nehemiah know what to ask for. After Nehemiah reaches Jerusalem, enemies plot against the work. But God gives Nehemiah the wisdom and courage he needs to ignore the troublemakers and complete the work.

This is a lesson about grace.

Grace empowers us to do God's will in all things. "As the will of man cooperates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings" (*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 333).

Teacher Enrichment

"Nehemiah . . . occupied a position of influence and honor in the Persian court. As cupbearer to the king, he was admitted freely to the royal presence. By virtue of his position, and because of his abilities and fidelity, he had become the monarch's friend and counselor" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 628).

"Four months Nehemiah waited for a favorable opportunity to present his request to the king" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 630).

"The faith of him who is constantly advancing does not weaken; for above, beneath, beyond, he recognizes Infinite Love, working out all things to accomplish His good purpose. God's true servants work with a determination that will not fail, because the throne of grace is their constant dependence.

"God has provided divine assistance for all the emergencies to which our human resources are unequal. He gives the Holy Spirit to help in every strait, to strengthen our hope and assurance, to illuminate our minds and purify our hearts. He provides opportunities and opens channels of working. If His people are watching the indications of His providence, and are ready to cooperate with Him, they will see mighty results" (*Prophets and Kings*, p. 660).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Cupbearer's Relay</i> B. <i>Sad Faces</i> C. <i>Rainbow Handprints</i>	Bibles, two serving trays, two plastic cups Bibles, paper, pencils Bibles; blue, indigo, or violet finger paints rainbow wall banner started; in Lesson 6; baby wipes or wet paper towels
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> piece of pottery from last week with a sign "God gives too." paper brick-shaped cutouts, pencils
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	fancy cup and tray, cardboard blocks or boxes for wall; imitation swords, spears, bows, and arrows; Bible-times costumes white/chalkboard, markers/chalk, eraser Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Scenario</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Strengthening Hands</i> B. <i>Stress Ball</i>	Bible, modeling clay, plastic place mats or waxed paper, resealable plastic bags balloon for each child, flour, funnel

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- two serving trays
- two plastic cups

A. Cupbearer's Relay

Say: **You are all going to be cupbearers.** Divide the students into two equal teams (more for a large group) for a relay. Say: **We're not going to fill these cups with anything because we might spill it, but we will put a cup on a tray and ask you to walk as fast as you can to the opposite side of the room, turn around, and walk back while trying to balance the cup on your tray. Then hand the tray to the next person in your line.** They repeat this. If the cup falls off the tray, the person carrying the tray has to pick it up and start over.

Debriefing

Ask: **Was being a cupbearer as easy as you thought?** (no) **Sometimes things that seem to be easy are hard to do. Today we're going to learn about a real cupbearer, Nehemiah, and how God helped him do something difficult. Let's read our memory verse, Nehemiah 2:8. Read aloud. The only way Nehemiah was able to do his difficult task was through God's grace and power. That's what today's message is about:**



GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils

B. Sad Faces

Ask the children to remember a time they were really sad. Then ask them to draw the sad face they probably had during that time.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Who will share their face drawing and tell us why you were so sad? Today we will learn about Nehemiah and why he was sad. But we'll also learn about how he did something difficult and became happy. Let's read Nehemiah 2:8 to find out his secret.** Read it aloud. **Nehemiah was able to do his difficult task through God's grace and power. God still gives us His grace and power. Who will help us do what God wants us to do? Today's message tells us:**



GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.

Say that with me.

C. Rainbow Handprints

Continue creating the Rainbow Handprints wall banner started in Lesson 6. This week the children will finish with blue handprints and then indigo and/or violet.

Debriefing

Say: **How do you like our finished banner?** (It is pretty.) **Today we will hear how God gave some workers' hands power to do His will. Let's read Nehemiah 2:8.** Read aloud. **Our rainbow reminds us that God will keep His promise to do the same for us. Remember today's message:**



GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- blue, indigo, or violet finger paints
- rainbow wall banner started in Lesson 6
- baby wipes or wet paper towels

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40)
- "Whisper a Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 96)
- "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 98)
- "Trust in the Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 111)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Ask: **What does God give?** (grace, power to do His will) **In response, let's give a gift to Him.**

You Need:

- piece of pottery from last week with a sign reading "God gives too."



Prayer

Say: **We will talk about bricks in our Bible story today. Write on your brick cutout the name of a person or situation that really needs God's grace and power. Then let's pray that God will be present in each of the situations you listed.** Invite one or two children to pray, then close with your own short prayer.

You Need:

- paper brick-shaped cutouts
- pencils

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- fancy cup and tray
- cardboard blocks or boxes for wall
- imitation swords, spears, bows, and arrows
- Bible-times costume for each child

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Nehemiah, Hanani, the king, army officers and soldiers, city leaders, Jewish workers, enemies

Tell the children that they are to act out today's Bible story as you read it. Assign volunteers to the persons or categories listed above, and dress them in Bible-times costumes.

Setting the Scene

Designate one corner of the room to be Jerusalem. In another area, have the king seated on a "throne" (chair) surrounded by army officers and soldiers. Near Jerusalem, to one side, seat the city leaders and the Jewish workers. On the other side, seat the "enemies."

Read or tell the story.

Nehemiah hugged his visiting brother Hanani. *[Nehemiah hugs Hanani.]* "How are you and the rest of the Jewish people surviving back in Jerusalem?"

Hanani looked sad. *[Hanani looks sad and shakes his head.]* "Not well," he said. "The wall around Jerusalem has been torn down. The gates have all been burned. The city is unprotected."

Nehemiah sank into a chair and dropped his head. *[Nehemiah sits down and hangs his head.]*

For days Nehemiah mourned. He fasted and prayed. *[Nehemiah kneels and looks as if he is praying.]* "O, Lord," he pleaded, "I am going to ask the king for a great favor. Please put it in his heart to be kind to me."

Nehemiah waited for the right time. One evening Nehemiah carried the king's

wine to him as usual. *[Nehemiah carries a fancy cup on a tray to the king.]* The king looked up. "Why do you look so sad tonight?" he asked. *[Nehemiah stands in front of the king, looking sad.]*

"Long live the king!" Nehemiah exclaimed. "I am sad because I found out that the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins. The wall has been torn down. The gates have been burned."

"How can I help?" the king asked kindly.

Nehemiah prayed a quick, silent prayer. *[Nehemiah briefly looks up.]* Then he answered the king. *[Nehemiah "talks."]* "If you are pleased with me, your servant, please send me to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried."

Not only did the king say that Nehemiah could go—he said yes to Nehemiah's request for a letter to the manager of the king's forest. "Tell him to give me wood so I can build the city gates, and the walls, and a house for myself," Nehemiah requested.

[The king "writes" a letter and gives it to Nehemiah.] And he ordered army officers and soldiers on horseback to go with Nehemiah and protect him on the long journey to Jerusalem. *[Nehemiah, army officers, and soldiers walk together toward a predesignated "Jerusalem."]*

Nehemiah finally reached Jerusalem. After staying there three days, he rode his donkey around at night to determine the damage. *[Turn out lights while Nehemiah walks and looks around "Jerusalem."]* He found that he couldn't even ride through some of the gates into the city because they were so plugged with fallen parts of the wall.

Then Nehemiah spoke to the city leaders. *[Nehemiah stands before city leaders and "speaks."]* He told them how God had helped him so far. "Let's rebuild the

wall of Jerusalem!" he exclaimed.

So the people began to work.
[*Nehemiah, city leaders, and Jewish workers "work" on the wall.*] And they worked hard.

But their enemies [*turn toward enemies; enemies frown*] did not want God's people to build their protective wall again. [*Enemies laugh and point.*] "What do these people think? Their wall would collapse if even a fox walked on it."

But the Jewish people kept working. [*Workers continue working.*] The enemies made plans to attack the Jews. But the Jewish people prayed to God for protection. Then Nehemiah told them to get their weapons and to guard the wall with one hand and work with the other. [*Workers hold "swords, spears, or bows and arrows" in one hand and "work" with other hand.*] "Don't be afraid of the enemy! Remember the Lord!" Nehemiah encouraged them.

Many times the enemies tried to stop the rebuilding work. But Nehemiah prayed constantly, and God gave him the courage and wisdom to continue. And the wall that would help protect Jerusalem again was finished in just 52 days!

Debriefing

Ask: **Why was Nehemiah sad?**

What did the king do to help Nehemiah?

When did Nehemiah ride around the walls? What did he find? How would you have felt if you were trying to build the wall while worrying about being attacked? (scared)

How did God help them finish the project? (He protected, gave power, guided.) **What will God do for you when you are trying to do what He wants you to do? Let's remember our message:**



**GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE
AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.**

Memory Verse

Draw two large hands with the fingers extended, where all can see. Above each finger, write one word of the memory verse (1-**The**, 2-**gracious**, 3-**hand**, 4-**of**, 5-**my**, 6-**God**, 7-**was**, 8-**upon**, 9-**me**, 10-**Nehemiah 2:8**).

Read the verse aloud with the children. Ask a volunteer to erase one word. Then ask the class to read the verse, filling in the missing word. Repeat, erasing another word. Each time the verse is read, have the class do it differently—in a whisper, quickly, slowly, while standing on one foot, etc. Continue until all words have been erased and the children can say the entire verse from memory.

Bible Study

Ask: **Do you remember how many days it took for Nehemiah and his workers to finish rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem?** (52 days) **That is a short time for such a BIG project! Let's read why they were able to do this amazing thing.** Help the children find and read aloud Nehemiah 6:15, 16.

Say: **Now we're going to look up a story about a time that people were building but *didn't* finish their job.** Find and read Genesis 11:1-9 together.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why didn't the tower builders finish?** (because they were not doing God's will; they thought they could out-smart God)

In which group would you rather have been working? (Nehemiah's group) **Why?** (because God helped them)

When you have a big thing to do, what will you do? (Ask God to help me.) **Remember our message:**



**GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE
AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.**

You Need:

- white/chalk-board
- markers/chalk
- eraser

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

Scenario

Read the following scenario to the children.

At first José was friendly and nice. But Pablo listened to another friend, and together they teased and taunted José. Now José says unkind things and acts tough. Pablo wishes he'd stop. Pablo is sorry he was unkind to José, but he's afraid to admit it to him. Pablo has talked to his parents about it, and they have prayed together.

Debriefing

Ask: **What does Pablo need to do?** (Ask for José's forgiveness.) **Is asking for**

forgiveness what God wants him to do? (Yes.) **Is asking for forgiveness easy for you?** (No.)

How can God help Pablo do what he should? (give Pablo courage and the right words to say; help José accept Pablo's apology)

Have you ever had to do something difficult? (yes, no) **If so, tell us about it.** Allow time.

When you need to do something that is very hard, what will you remember? (God will give me courage and will help me to say and do the right thing.) **Yes, let's remember . . .**



GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.

Sharing the Lesson

A. Strengthening Hands

Give each child a small ball of modeling clay and ask them to squeeze it in their hands while you read Nehemiah 6:9 aloud.

Debriefing

Say: **Do you feel as if you are strengthening your hands to do God's work?** (Yes, because exercise strengthens hand muscles.)

Ask: **How else can your hands be strengthened?** (God helping us, giving courage, the right words to say, etc.)

For what work do your hands need strengthening? (Wait for responses.)

Say: **Take the modeling clay with you today as a reminder of your work. You can share it with someone you can help. Tell them about the best way to strengthen their hands—to do God's will. Let's say our message again:**



GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.

You Need:

- Bible
- modeling clay
- plastic place mats or waxed paper
- resealable plastic bags

B. Stress Ball

Do not blow up the balloon. Help each child fill their balloon with flour and tie a knot at the opening. The result is a "stress ball" that can be squeezed in times of stress.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many squeezes can you do without your hands getting tired?** Allow time.

Say: **Plan to share your "stress ball" with a friend. Tell them that they do not need to be stressed, because God's grace can help them and empower them to overcome stress.** Allow time for the children to decide and tell with whom they will share.

Remember, no matter how hard things may seem, God will give us the grace and power to do His will. Let's say our message again.



GOD GIVES ME THE GRACE AND POWER TO DO HIS WILL.

You Need:

- balloon for each child
- flour
- funnel

Closing

Close with prayer, asking God to strengthen the children's hands to do His will by giving them grace and power.

Nehemiah—God's Builder

References

Nehemiah 1-4; 6;
Prophets and Kings,
 pp. 628-645,
 653-660

Memory Verse

"The gracious hand
 of my God was on
 me" (Nehemiah
 2:8, NIV).

The Message

God gives me
 the grace and
 power to
 do His will.

"How come the pastor is always asking for money?" asked Jessica.

"Because our church family has outgrown our old church and we need a new one," answered Dad. "It takes money and a lot of people willing to help build," he explained. "It reminds me of Nehemiah rebuilding Jerusalem's walls."

"I'm so glad to see you again!" Nehemiah exclaimed, hugging his brother Hanani. Hanani had recently arrived with others from Judah. "How are you? How are the rest of the Jews surviving back in Jerusalem?"

The smile left Hanani's face. "Not well," he said sadly. "The wall around Jerusalem has been torn down. The gates have all been burned. Enemies could walk right in and attack God's people."

Nehemiah sank into a chair. Tears spilled down his cheeks.

For days Nehemiah mourned. He fasted, and he prayed. "Oh, Lord," he pleaded, "listen to my prayer! I am going to ask the king for a great favor. Please put it into his heart to be kind to me."

One evening Nehemiah went to work as usual. He carried the king's drink to him at the dinner table.

The king looked up. "Why do you look so sad tonight?" he asked.

"Long live the king!" Nehemiah exclaimed. "I am sad because the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins."

"How can I help you?" the king asked kindly.

Nehemiah prayed a quick, silent prayer. Then he answered the king. "Please send me to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried."

Nehemiah took a big breath. He

had more to ask. "O, king, please give me a letter to the manager of your forest. Tell him to give me wood so I can build. I will rebuild the city gates, and the walls, and a house for myself."

The king wrote the letter. Then he ordered army officers and soldiers on horseback to go with Nehemiah. They would protect him on the long, long journey to Jerusalem.

Nehemiah finally reached Jerusalem. After staying there three days, he rode his donkey around at night to look at the damage. He found that he couldn't even ride through some of the gates into the city. They were plugged with big rocks that had been part of the wall.

Then Nehemiah spoke to the city leaders. He told them about the king, and how God had helped him so far. "Let's rebuild the wall of Jerusalem!" he exclaimed.

So the people began the work. And they worked hard.

But their enemies made plans to attack and kill the Jews. The Jews prayed and asked God to protect them. Then Nehemiah told them to get their swords, their spears, and their bows and arrows. They would guard the wall with one hand and work with the other. "Don't be afraid



of the enemy! Remember the Lord!" Nehemiah encouraged them.

Many times the enemies tried to stop the rebuilding work. Nehemiah prayed constantly, and God gave him the wisdom to know what to do. The work continued. And the wall was finished in just 52 days!

God blessed this project in many ways. He gave Nehemiah courage to ask the king for help. He gave the workers power to carry on their rebuilding. God truly led His people.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Go for a walk and find a wall (or fence). Look at how it is built. How long do you think it would take you to build a wall like that? Find a place nearby and read your lesson story together.
- Read and discuss Nehemiah 2:8 together. Whose hand is over you? Thank Him for it.
- Sing "A Little Talk With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 98) before prayer.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss Nehemiah 1. Practice being a cupbearer and take a drink of water to someone.
- Draw a picture of what the Jerusalem wall might have looked like. Write the memory verse on it and place it where you will see it often.
- Pray that God will fill you with His power.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Nehemiah 2. Look at verse 20 again. Whom did Nehemiah trust? Whom do you trust to help you?
- Start a family "Blessing Book." Talk about times God has helped your family and write about them. Add to it often.
- Review the memory verse. Tell what it means. Then thank God for blessing your family.

Tuesday

- Read and discuss Nehemiah 3 for family worship. Name the gates of Jerusalem. How many were there? What do you think each name meant?
- Look for something in your house that needs repairing. If possible, help fix it.
- Say your memory verse from memory.
- Gather some stones to build a wall. What else would you need?
- Thank God for a safe place to live.

Wednesday

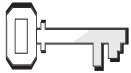
- Read and discuss Nehemiah 4 with your family. Look at verse 10. Ask an adult if they ever feel discouraged. What do they do about it?
- Look at verses 17 and 18. Try to do something helpful with only one hand. Was it easy or hard? How do you think the workers felt?
- Review the memory verse; then sing "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40) before prayer. Thank God that He is able to meet your needs.

Thursday

- For worship, read and discuss Nehemiah 6 with your family.
- Play "Builders and Enemies." For three minutes, build a wall with blocks. The rest of your family will act like enemies and try to keep you from working. At the end of three minutes, switch roles. Tell your family what it was like trying to work while they bothered you. How did Nehemiah do it? Look again at verses 2 and 3.
- Look at verse 9. Have you ever felt nervous or scared by someone who may have been trying to hurt you? What did Nehemiah do when others tried to do that to him? Thank God for being with you when you are scared.
- Make up a tune for your memory verse and sing it together.

Friday

- Act out Nehemiah's story. Read Nehemiah 6:16 again. Ask your parents about work they have been able to do with the help of God. Add this to your family "Blessing Book."
- Say your memory verse together.
- Make a kitchen band of pots, pans, spoons, etc. Celebrate God's grace and power by singing and playing "The Joy of the Lord" (*He Is Our Song*, no. 92). Thank God for His help for your family.



References

Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1; Isaiah 53; Mark 15:22-39; Acts 1:9-11; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 231-242, 469, 470, 627, 628, 830, 831



Memory Verse

"You know . . . that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled" (Joshua 23:14, NIV).



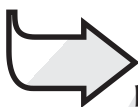
Objectives

The children will:

Know that fulfillment of Bible prophecy helps us know God keeps His promises.

Feel confident in God's Word, believing that He keeps His word.

Respond by learning more about God's promises and claiming them.



The Message

I know God keeps His promises, because Bible prophecies come true.

Back to the Future

Monthly Theme

God keeps His promises.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The Old Testament records prophecies of Jesus' birth and life on earth. The New Testament records their fulfillment. For example, Micah 5:2 foretells Jesus' birthplace, and Matthew 2:1 records the fulfillment. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 predicts His life as the suffering servant of God and humanity, and the four Gospels faithfully record the fulfillment. This fulfillment brings the assurance that God keeps His word.

This is a lesson about grace.

Because so many promises in Scripture describe events that have come to pass, we can have the assurance that God keeps His word. When He says Jesus will come again, we can believe it because of the promises fulfilled in the past.

Teacher Enrichment

To the travelers on the road to Emmaus, "Christ expounded in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. Had He first made Himself known to them, their hearts would have been satisfied. In the fullness of their joy they would have hungered for nothing more. But it was necessary for them to understand the witness borne to Him by the types and prophecies of the Old Testament. Upon these their faith must be established" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 796-799).

"It is the voice of Christ that speaks through patriarchs and prophets, from the days of Adam even to the closing scenes of time. The Savior is revealed in the Old Testament as clearly as in the New. . . . The miracles of Christ are a proof of His divinity; but a stronger proof that He is the world's Redeemer is found in comparing the prophecies of the Old Testament with the history of the New" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 799).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 5.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	<i>A. God Keeps His Promises!</i> <i>B. Promises, Promises</i> <i>C. Weather Forecasts</i>	Bibles, blank paper, pencils, markers, crayons Bibles, blank cards, pencils and markers Bibles, clipping of a newspaper weather forecast
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbooks Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy, The SDA Hymnal</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> piece of pottery from last week with a sign reading "God is faithful" none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	pictures of Baby Jesus, Jesus on the cross, the second coming of Jesus Bible, three boxes, three labels, miscellaneous items to place in two boxes (see activity) Bibles, picture of Daniel 2 image (see p. 97), long piece of paper for a time line, paper, pencils
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Sharing Time</i>	Bibles
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Prophecy Picture Book</i>	paper, crayons, markers, pencils; or pictures from Readiness A, scissors, glue

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- blank paper
- pencils, markers, crayons

A. God Keeps His Promises!

Have the children divide a paper into thirds and draw the following three pictures: Jesus as a baby, Jesus on the cross, and the second coming of Jesus. (You may want to provide sample pictures.) Ask them to title the page "GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES!" These pictures may be used for "Experiencing the Story" and for "Sharing the Lesson."

Debriefing

Say: **These pictures may be used during the rest of today's lesson about Bible prophecy. What is prophecy?** (Telling what will happen before it happens.) **How would you feel about someone who says something will happen, and it does—over and over?** (safe, trusting, frightened, etc.) **In the Bible God tells us what will happen in the future. When you read or hear something that God says, what can you know for sure? Let's look in Joshua 23:14.** Read the memory verse portion aloud. **Our message today repeats the answer we just found in the Bible.**



I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- blank cards
- pencils and markers

B. Promises, Promises

Give the children blank cards and ask them to draw pictures of something they promise to do this week to make someone happy.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you feel sure that you will keep your promise?** (maybe, yes, no) **Do you always keep your promises?** (I try, no) **How do you feel when people do not keep their promise to you?** (sad, disappointed, etc.) **Let's read Joshua 23:14 to find out who always keeps His promises.** Read the memory verse portion aloud. **Today we will discover why we can trust those promises. And today's message is:**



I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

Say that with me.

C. Weather Forecasts

Show the children the newspaper clipping. Ask them if they know the meaning of *forecast*. Do they know the weather forecast for today? Let them tell and discuss it.

Debriefing

Say: **What are weather forecasters trying to do?** (make prophecies about the weather, tell what will happen before it happens) **Do their forecasts always come true?** (no) **What about God's prophecies? Do you think they always come true?** (yes) **Let's read Joshua 23:14.** Read the memory verse portion. **Today we will discover why we can trust those promises. Our message is:**



I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- newspaper clipping of a weather forecast

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Standing on the Promises" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no. 518)
- "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 83)
- "Jesus Keeps His Promises" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 41)
- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **God does what He promises. He is faithful. One way we can be faithful is to give money to help His work in this world.**

You Need:

- piece of pottery from last week with a sign reading "God is faithful"



Prayer

Ask for prayer requests. Remind the children that God promises to be with them no matter what happens—and He keeps all His promises. Invite them to close their eyes and fold their hands as you sing your prayer together. Suggested prayers to sing: "The Lord's Prayer" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 99) or "Thank You, Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 101).

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- pictures from Readiness A or pictures of Baby Jesus, Jesus on the cross, and Jesus' second coming

Experiencing the Story

Say: **In today's story you will hear the words *promise, promises, or promised*.** Then share the following and have the children practice their responses before you read the story.

When you say:	They do:
promise,	Put index finger to
promises,	lips, then move
promised	outward in an arc.

Read or tell the story.

Can you remember a time someone broke a **promise** *[touch lips]* to you? *[Allow responses.]* Human beings often break **promises**. *[Touch lips.]* But God never breaks His **promises**. *[Touch lips.]* Whatever He says, He will do. He has always been like that, and He always will be.

God **promised** *[touch lips]* the Jews a king who would save them and bring them peace (Micah 5:1-5). They were told where He would be born. Where was that? *[Children respond, "Bethlehem."]* This **promise** *[touch lips]* was made 700 years before it actually happened.

Then, 700 years later, a baby was born. *[Show picture of Baby Jesus.]* Guess where. *[Children respond, "In Bethlehem."]* The Baby's name was "Immanuel," which means "God with us." And He would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:20-23). God keeps His **promises!** *[Touch lips.]*

Micah the prophet said that the **promised** *[touch lips]* Ruler would "shepherd His flock." Sure enough, when Jesus grew up, He called Himself the "Good Shepherd" who lays down His life for His sheep (John 10:14, 15). God keeps His **promises!** *[Touch lips.]*

And Jesus did lay down His life for the sins of everyone in the world (1 Corinthians 15:3). *[Show picture of Jesus on cross.]* God had **promised** *[touch lips]* through the prophets that Jesus would suffer and die to save His people from their sins (see Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 53; etc.). Isaiah said, "He was . . . a man of suffering. . . . He was crushed for our iniquities; . . . by his wounds we are healed. . . . The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . For he bore the sin of many" (Isaiah 53:3-12, NIV). Yes, Jesus really did die to save you and me from our sins. God keeps His **promises!** *[Touch lips.]*

One Sabbath, after Jesus had been living here on earth and was grown up, it was His turn to read from the Bible of that time—the scrolls. Jesus read a **promise** *[touch lips]* from Isaiah to the congregation about God's anointing someone to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and to free prisoners from darkness (Isaiah 61:1). Everyone listened closely. Then Jesus rolled the scroll back up and handed it to the attendant. He sat down for the discussion part of the service and said, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21, NIV). He was clearly saying, "I am the person you were **promised.**" *[touch lips]* This **promise** *[touch lips]* has come true!

In our time—the time of the end—we are waiting for the rest of God's **promises** *[touch lips]* to happen. One of these **promises** *[touch lips]* was given by angels just after Jesus went back to heaven. Do you remember it? *[Show picture of Jesus' second coming.]* It was the **promise** *[touch lips]* that "this same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11, NIV). Jesus Himself said, "I will come back and take you to be

with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:3, NIV).

All the other **promises** of God [touch lips] in the Bible came true. So we can believe this **promise** [touch lips] too—for God keeps all His **promises!** [Touch lips.]

Debriefing

Ask: **What prophecies about Jesus have already been fulfilled?** (He will be born in Bethlehem; He will die to save us; He will suffer for our sins; etc.) **Which prophecy has not yet been fulfilled?** (He will come again.)

After hearing our lesson story, what do you know about God? (I can depend on Him; He keeps all His promises.) **What is a good way to help you remember that God keeps His promises?** (To learn about His prophecies and how they came true.)

Remember today’s message?



I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

In advance, write “God Box” on one label and put a Bible inside that box. Place five or six miscellaneous items in the other two boxes. On a label for each of the other two boxes, list what is in each box. Switch the two labels and attach each to the wrong box.

With the children, open the boxes with the labels switched, pointing out that the labels are not true. Take the Bible out of the God Box and say that God’s Word is always true. He never makes mistakes. He keeps His promises.

You Need:

- Bible
- three boxes
- three labels
- miscellaneous common items to place in two boxes

Have the children find and read the memory verse (Joshua 23:14) from their Bibles as you read from the Bible in the God Box. Teach the memory verse one phrase at a time. Have the children repeat it until it becomes familiar.

Bible Study

In advance, copy the following time line on a long piece of paper (shelf paper works well).

600 B.C. 500 B.C. 400 B.C. 300 B.C. 200 B.C. 100 B.C. Jesus A.D. 100 A.D. 200 A.D. 300 A.D. 400 A.D. 500

Have the class take turns reading the verses of Daniel 2:31-35. Say: **God told Daniel this prophecy more than 500 years before Jesus was born.** Show the picture of the image.

We are going to mark on our time line when this prophecy came true.

Help the children mark the following dates on the time line.

Babylon fell, Medo-Persia came to rule—539 B.C.

Medo-Persia fell to Greece (Alexander the Great)—331 B.C.

Greece fell to Rome—168 B.C.

Roman rule ended/divided kingdoms begin—A.D. 476

God’s kingdom set up—?

Debriefing

Say: **The last part of the prophecy is yet to come true. Let’s write the words of Daniel 2:44 on a piece of paper to put in our promise box or book.** (Let the students know they can take their box or book home today.)

Ask: **Since the rest of Daniel’s prophecy happened just as God said it would, do you think we can trust that the last part will also come true?** (yes) **Let’s remember today’s message:**



I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

You Need:

- Bibles
- picture of Daniel 2 image (see p. 97)
- long piece of paper for a time line
- paper
- pencils

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bibles

Sharing Time

Ask: **Did you wake up this morning? Are you breathing? Did you have breakfast this morning or supper last night? God has promised to supply all our needs. Let's read about that in Philippians 4:19.** Allow time.

Ask: **What other promises has God made to you that He has kept?** Allow time for the children to tell any personal experiences that answer this question in the following manner: 1. Ask the children to give the main idea of one of God's Bible promises. 2. Then ask them to tell an experience of how God kept that promise in their lives. Example promises:

Unlimited blessings
Mark 9:23

Answers to prayer
Mark 11:24

Rewarding of our faith
Luke 17:6

Food
Psalm 136:25

Care
Psalm 91:11

Possibilities
Mark 9:23

Spiritual food and drink
John 6:35

Spiritual light
John 12:46

Power for service
John 14:12

Salvation
Romans 1:16

Debriefing

Ask: **How does telling about how God has helped you in the past keep you from worrying about tomorrow?** (If I remember how God kept His promises before, I won't worry about what I don't know.)

What do Bible prophecies tell you about our faithful God? (His prophecies always come true, so I can trust anything else He says He will do.) **Let's say our message again:**



I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

Sharing the Lesson

Prophecy Picture Book

Ask: **Whom do you know who might trust God more if they knew about how God's prophecies came true?** Allow time. **You can tell them that there are many incidents in the Bible in which God said things would happen and then later they did.** Have the children make a booklet to share with such a person.

If the children drew pictures for Readiness A, have them cut them apart and glue them in the appropriate place in their booklet.

Fold four sheets of paper in half to make two separate pages per sheet. Have the children do the following: Write portions of Micah 5:2 on one page and glue or draw a picture of Baby Jesus on the page across from the text. On the next page, write Isaiah 53:12, last part, and opposite it glue or draw a picture of Jesus

on the cross. Write Acts 1:11 on the next page and glue or draw a picture of Jesus coming in the clouds. On the last page have them write a promise of their choice from their promise box or book and draw a picture to illustrate it.

Debriefing

Have the children tell the class with whom they hope to share their promise booklet. Ask: **Because of our lesson today, how sure are you that you can really trust God's promises?** (very, very sure) **Let's say our message one more time:**



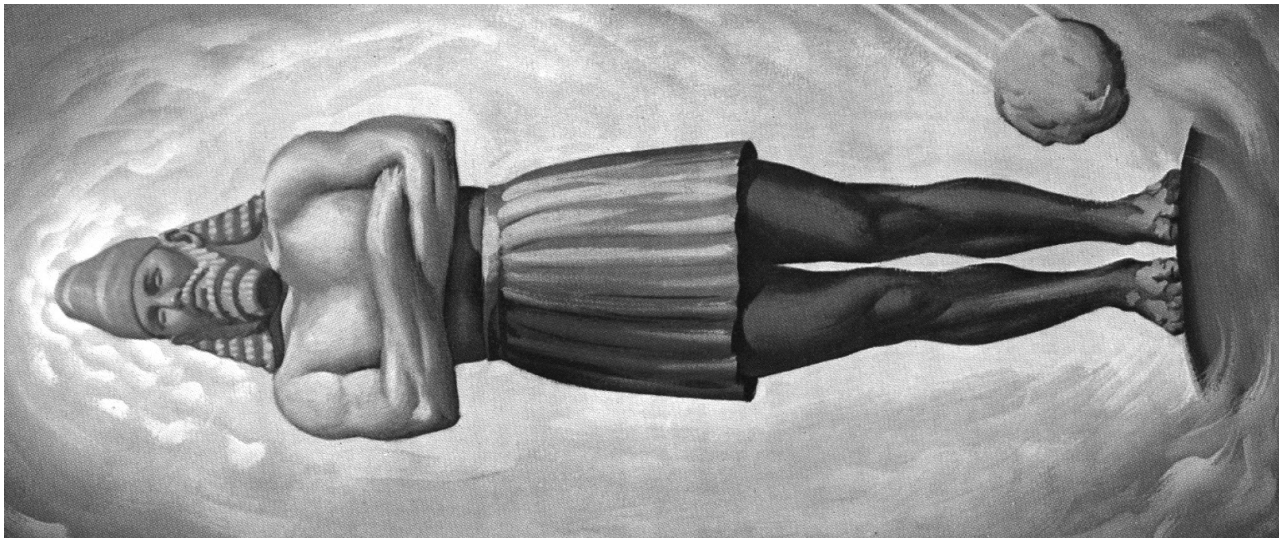
I KNOW GOD KEEPS HIS PROMISES, BECAUSE BIBLE PROPHECIES COME TRUE.

Closing

After prayer, sing "In His Time" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 42).

You Need:

- paper
- crayons, markers, pencils or
- pictures from Readiness A
- scissors
- glue



Use this picture with Bible Study activity.

Back to the Future

References

Micah 5:2;
Matthew 2:1;
Isaiah 53; Mark
15:22-39; Acts
1:9-11; *The Desire
of Ages*, pp.
231-242, 469,
470, 627, 628,
830, 831

Memory Verse

"You know . . . that
not one of all the
good promises the
Lord your God
gave you has
failed. Every
promise has been
fulfilled" (Joshua
23:14, NIV).

The Message

I know God keeps
His promises,
because Bible
prophecies
come true.

Carlos knew how to ride a bicycle, but his little sister Sarita did not. Sarita wished that she could learn. "Carlos, would you teach me to ride a bicycle?" Sarita begged.

"I'll start teaching you tomorrow after school," Carlos promised. "I want to ride to Juan's house right now."

The next day after school Carlos got out his bicycle. Sarita came running to him. But Carlos said, "I'll see you later, Sarita. Juan has asked me to play ball with him." Sarita started to cry and said, "But you promised to teach me after school today."

Carlos answered, "I don't want to do it today. Juan is waiting for me." And he rode away.

Did Carlos keep his promise?

God never breaks His promises. He has always done what He promised, and He always will.

God promised the Jews a king who would save them and bring them peace (Micah 5:1-5). They were told where He would be born: Out of Bethlehem will come "one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times" (Micah 5:2, NIV).

Seven hundred years later a baby was born in Bethlehem. This Baby's birth was announced by angels from heaven! He was Emmanuel, which means "God with us." And He would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:20-23). God keeps His promises!

Micah the prophet said that the promised Ruler would "shepherd his flock." His greatness would "reach to the ends of the earth" (Micah 5:4, NIV). That was an exciting promise, because the Jews

had been treated like servants for many years.

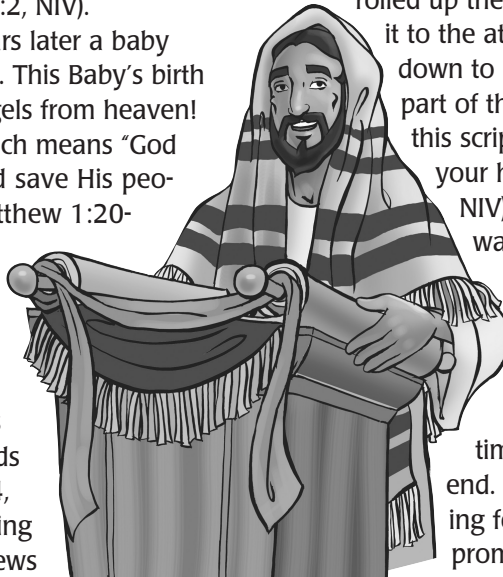
Sure enough, when Jesus grew up He called Himself the "Good Shepherd" who lays down His life for His sheep (John 10:14, 15). God keeps His promises!

And Jesus did lay down His life for the sins of everyone in the world (1 Corinthians 15:3). God promised more about Jesus through the prophets. Jesus would suffer and die to save His people from their sins (Isaiah 53:5, 12). Isaiah also wrote that Jesus was familiar with suffering. "He was crushed for our iniquities; . . . by his wounds we are healed. . . . The Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. . . . For he bore the sin of many" (Isaiah 53:3-12, NIV). Yes, Jesus really did die to save you and me. God keeps His promises!

One Sabbath after Jesus had been living here on earth and was grown up, He was in the synagogue. He was invited to read from the Bible of that time—the scrolls. Jesus read about a promise from Isaiah. God would anoint someone to preach good news to the poor, proclaim freedom for the prisoners, and release prisoners from darkness (Isaiah 61:1). Everyone listened closely. And then Jesus

rolled up the scroll and handed it to the attendant. He sat down to lead the discussion part of the service. "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:21, NIV), He announced. He was clearly saying, "I am the person you were promised. This promise has come true!"

Now it's our time—the time of the end. And we are waiting for the last of God's promises to be fulfilled—



the promise given by angels just after Jesus went back to heaven. Do you remember it? “This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven” (Acts 1:11, NIV). Jesus Himself said, “I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am” (John 14:3, NIV).

All the other Bible promises of God have come true. And this one will too. We can believe this promise—for God keeps all His promises! Jesus will come again!

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Read and discuss your lesson story with your family.
- Take a Sabbath walk together. Find a strong rock and bring it home. Read your memory verse in Joshua 23:14. Copy it on your strong rock to remind you of the strength of God’s promises. Then thank Him for them.

Sunday

- How has God promised to let us know His plans? Read and discuss Amos 3:7 for family worship. Thank God for His plan for us.
- Attach your memory verse to the cover of the promise book or the promise box that you made in Sabbath School. Point to it and read your memory verse with expression. Then read a promise from the book or box.

Monday

- Find a twig or small branch. Break it, then tape the broken pieces together. Was it easy to break? Was it easy to repair? Is the repaired twig as strong as before? This twig is like promises. If they are broken, their strength is gone, and they can’t ever be like new.
- Read and discuss together Genesis 8:18-9:1, 8-17. What promise did God make to Noah and to us as well? Has He kept it?
- Say your memory verse; then, thank God for Bible promises.

Tuesday

- For family worship, read and discuss Daniel 2:31-45. Make the image in the king’s dream out of clay or draw one and color the different parts the right color. What are the materials in the image? Show the image to your family and explain the dream to them.

- Say your memory verse together.
- Sing “Soon and Very Soon” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 89).
Thank Jesus for the promise of His coming.

Wednesday

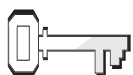
- Today would be a good day to share with someone the “Prophecy Picture Book” that you made in Sabbath School. If you are nervous about sharing, read God’s promise in Matthew 28:18-20.
- Say your memory verse without help.
- Sing “Anywhere With Jesus” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 45) before prayer. Ask Jesus to be with you as you share your book.

Thursday

- Something exciting is going to happen soon. With your family, read about it in Revelation 22:12.
- Read John 14:1-3 together. What is the promise? Is it for us?
- Where would you like to live in heaven? Draw a plan of your home there. Ask your family what they think their home in heaven will be like.
- Say your memory verse together. Sing “Jesus Keeps His Promises” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 41). Then, thank Him for the home He is preparing for you.

Friday

- For sundown worship, celebrate the prophecies that came true when Jesus was born. Read aloud Micah 5:2-5 and Matthew 2:1. How many years before Jesus’ birth did God tell His people exactly where Jesus would be born? What other prophecies have come true?
- Sing this song to the tune of “Happy Birthday”:
Dear God, we love You. / Your prophecies came true. / When Jesus was born / On that wonderful morn’.
- End the celebration with a prayer of thanks to God for keeping all His promises.



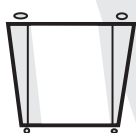
References

Luke 1:5-23, 57-80;
*The Desire of
Ages*, pp. 97-100



Memory Verse

"Praise be to the
Lord because he
has come to his people
and redeemed them"
(Luke 1:68, NIV).

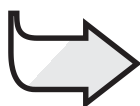


Objectives

The children will:
Know that telling
others about God's
goodness is worshipping Him.

Feel eager to praise God
publicly for His goodness.

Respond by praising God
for something specific
during the coming week.



The Message

I worship God when I
tell others about His
goodness and love.

Look, He's Speechless!

Monthly Theme

Worshipping is sharing our love for Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

An angel comes to Zechariah while he serves as a priest in the temple and tells him that he and his wife, Elizabeth, will have a son who will prepare the way for Jesus. Because he doubts, Zechariah becomes mute. When the baby is born, God restores Zechariah's ability to speak when he insists on naming the baby John, as the angel directed. Zechariah publicly sings a song of praise to God for the miracle of his son's birth.

This is a lesson about worship.

Sharing the wonderful things God does for us with others is an act of worship. God enjoys our public words of joy and praise for His many blessings.

Teacher Enrichment

"Zechariah, a Jewish priest, was told before anyone else that God was setting in motion his own visit to earth. . . . The news of the coming Savior was eclipsed by doubts about his own ability to father the child the angel promised him. . . . As a result, God prevented Zechariah from speaking until the promise became reality" (*Life Application Study Bible*, Notes and Bible Helps on Luke 1:18-20, 67-79 [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005], p. 1178).

Room Decorations

Create a life-sized, paper Nativity scene on the wall. (You might project Bible study guide illustrations onto the wall and trace them; also see Readiness A, Lesson 12.) Bulletin board ideas: JESUS, WE WORSHIP YOU caption with silhouettes of praying children, each with one of your children's names. JESUS, YOU ARE THE KING OF OUR HEARTS caption with large crown surrounded by hearts with your children's names, preceded by the words "Prince" or "Princess."

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Speechless!</i> B. <i>Mute Praise</i> C. <i>God's Graffiti</i>	Bibles, energetic male guest Bibles, praise music (optional), paper, pencils, markers, crayons Bibles, large paper wall banner, pencils, markers, crayons
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!" none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	"temple" corner (candlestick, curtain, etc.), male guest in priestly robe, slips of paper with written verses copy of the memory verse for each child, angel stick or shape (see p. 106), craft sticks, glue Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Praise God!</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>"Good News" Paper</i>	newspaper, crayons, markers, colored paper in various shapes and sizes

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- energetic male guest

A. Speechless!

Invite an energetic male guest to, without words, enthusiastically greet the children at the door. He can point to them or walk them to their seats, shaking hands, etc.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you feel when (name of greeter) did not speak to you when you came in?** (It felt strange.) **Did you ask him any questions?** (yes, no) **Why do you think he didn't speak to you?** (not sure) **Our Bible story today is about a man who had some very special news, but who couldn't speak for a while. Let's find and read Luke 1:68, our memory verse.** Find and read aloud together. **This is what the man said when he finally could talk. And that reminds me of today's message:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS GOODNESS AND LOVE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- praise music (optional)
- paper
- pencils, markers, crayons

B. Mute Praise

Because the lesson will be about Zechariah's mute condition, give the children a chance to praise God in silence. You might play some praise music during this time. Say: **It's praise time, everyone! We are going to try something different this morning. We are going to praise God the way a man in today's lesson did—without talking or singing! What ways of silently praising God can you think of?** (smiling, praying, bowing before God, writing poems/songs, sending notes of encouragement, etc.) Give each child a sheet of paper and invite them to write a note or draw a picture that praises God.

Debriefing

Ask: **How did you praise God without using your voice?** Wait for responses. **A man in our Bible story for today couldn't talk for many months. He had to find other ways to worship God. Let's read our memory verse from Luke 1:68.** Read aloud. **This is what the man said when he finally could talk. Our message today is:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS GOODNESS AND LOVE.

Say that with me.

C. God's Graffiti

Prepare in advance a large banner with the words of the memory verse written in large, festive letters. Allow the children to work on this banner for the next four Sabbaths during Readiness time. They can add color and design to the letters, words of praise to God, and/or pictures that relate to the Christmas story.

NOTE: This banner will be used again in Lesson 11.

You Need:

- Bibles
- large paper wall banner
- pencils, markers, crayons

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy writing your praise for God where all can see?** Wait for responses. **What pictures or words of praise did you add to the banner today?** Wait for responses. **This is one more way to praise God and tell others about His goodness and love. Let's read our memory verse, Luke 1:68.** Read aloud. **Remember today's message:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS GOODNESS AND LOVE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 1)

"Clap Your Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 4)

"Psalm 66" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 11)

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 83)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **We worship and praise God when we tell others about His goodness and love. Giving our money is another way to praise Him.**

You Need:

- container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!"



Prayer

Take prayer requests first. Then do a "popcorn prayer," inviting the children to name things for which they want to praise God. They can say their word or phrase at any time, like popcorn popping. Close with a prayer about the special requests.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- “temple” corner (candlestick, curtain, etc.)
- male guest
- priestly robe
- slips of paper with written verses

Experiencing the Story

In advance, divide Zechariah’s song (see end of Experiencing the Story) into portions for the children in your class to read. Write the portions on slips of paper, number them in order, and distribute them to the children, to be read at the appropriate time. (Small group: Each child reads more than one paper.)

Set up a “temple” corner in one corner of the room.

Read or tell the story.

[Male guest dressed as a priest addresses children.] Hello, boys and girls. My name is Zechariah. I am a priest. I live in the hill country of Judea with my good wife, Elizabeth. We love God very much. For a long time we wanted our own child, but no child came. We became very old, so we gave up hope.

When it is my turn, I go to the temple to serve. *[Zechariah steps into the “temple” corner.]* I was in the temple burning incense and praying for the people of Israel. A lot of people were outside praying at the same time. Suddenly an angel stood at the right side of the incense altar.

At first I was confused and frightened, but the angel said, “Zechariah, don’t be afraid. Your prayer has been heard by God. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to a son. You will name him John. . . . Many people will be happy because of his birth” (Luke 1:13, 14, ICB).

I asked the angel, “How can I know that what you say is true? I am an old man, and my wife is old, too” (Luke 1:18, ICB).

The angel answered, “God sent me to talk to you and to tell you this good news. . . . You will lose your speech

because you did not believe what I told you. But these things will really happen” (Luke 1:19, 20, ICB).

The angel disappeared, and I finally went out to face the praying people. They were worried about me. When I couldn’t speak to them, they knew that I had probably had a vision from God. *[Zechariah walks away from the temple corner.]* I finished my work at the temple and went home to try to tell Elizabeth all that happened. I couldn’t talk, so it wasn’t easy.

When the baby was born, Elizabeth and I named him John, just as the angel had told us to. But our neighbors wanted us to name him Zechariah. My wife said, “No! He is to be called John” (Luke 1:60, NIV). Because I couldn’t talk, I wrote that on a tablet and held it up for them to see. Suddenly I could speak again. I praised God so much that all the neighbors in all the surrounding mountains talked about it!

Help me now to share the song of praise that I sang about our special child and the special work God had for him. *[Have the children line up and read aloud in order what is written on their pieces of paper.]*

1. “Let us thank the Lord, the God of Israel.”

2. “God has come to help his people and has given them freedom.”

3. “God has given us a powerful Savior from the family of God’s servant David.”

4. “God said that he would do this. He said it through his holy prophets who lived long ago.”

5. “God will save us from our enemies and from the power of all those who hate us.”

6. “God said he would give mercy to our ancestors. And he remembered his holy promise.”

7. “God promised Abraham, our father, that he would free us from the power of our

enemies, so that we could serve him without fear."

8. "We will be righteous and holy before God as long as we live."

9. "Now you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God."

10. "You will go first before the Lord to prepare the people for his coming."

11. "You will make his people know that they will be saved. They will be saved by having their sins forgiven."

12. "With the loving mercy of our God, a new day from heaven will shine upon us."

13. "God will help those who live in darkness, in the fear of death."

14. "He will guide us into the path that goes toward peace."

(Zechariah's song is taken from Luke 1:68-79 in the *International Children's Bible*.)

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you feel when others tell you about God's goodness to them?** (I love and trust God even more.) **How do you feel when you share God's goodness with others?** (I feel more thankful, and closer to God.) **You are worshipping God when you tell others about Him. Remember our message:**



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS
GOODNESS AND LOVE.**

Memory Verse

Give each child a cut-out copy of the angel shape on page 106 and a tongue depressor or craft stick. Have them glue the angel shape to the stick. If sticks are not available, have them

just hold on to the angel cutout. (They can decorate it later at home.) Then give each child a copy of the memory verse. Tell them to read it to you one at a time. Then,

You Need:

- craft sticks
- glue
- copy of the memory verse for each child
- angel stick or shape (see p. 106)

using their angel stick or shape, have them touch their mouths and ask them to read the memory verse *with their mouth completely closed*. Then have them read it with their teeth together, but moving their lips.

Again, have each child touch their mouths with the angel stick or shape, and have them read the memory verse aloud.

Ask: **How hard was it to read something without opening your mouth?** (I can read it, but no one can understand me.) **Was it easier using your lips but not opening your teeth?** (Yes, it was easier to be understood.)

Say: **The words of our memory verse are part of the song of praise that Zechariah sang to the Lord after John was born. Let's try to say our verse the way Zechariah might have sounded after not speaking for nine months.** (Lead the children in saying the verse together enthusiastically. Repeat until the children are familiar with the text.)

Bible Study

Say: **Zechariah's song, that you read during today's story, is found in Luke 1:67-79. Find this song in your own Bible.** Allow time. Then ask the children the debriefing questions. Have them read the answers from the Bible.

You Need:
• Bibles

Debriefing

Say: **Zechariah's song is divided into two parts. Verses 67-75 are about praising whom? (God) For what does he praise God?**

Verses 76-79 are about the work of whom? (John) What does he say about John?

We may not write a song, but how can we praise God? (sing a song, tell someone how much God loves us, etc.)

Remember ...



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS
GOODNESS AND LOVE.**

Applying the Lesson

Praise God!

Say: **Zechariah used a special song of praise to worship the Lord. Those were among the first words he said after not being able to talk for many months. They must have been very special words to him.**

Let's say the words again, but this time let's do it like this:

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of [the name of your Sabbath School or church], because He has [think of something to praise God for and say it here]."

Debriefing

Ask: **Wasn't it easy to praise God with others?** (yes) **Zechariah wanted everyone to know how much he loved God, and you are doing the same.**

Say: **Sometimes people forget about God and even say bad things about Him. How do you think He feels?** (Sad, hurt—for He has feelings too.) **What can we do? Let's remember our message:**

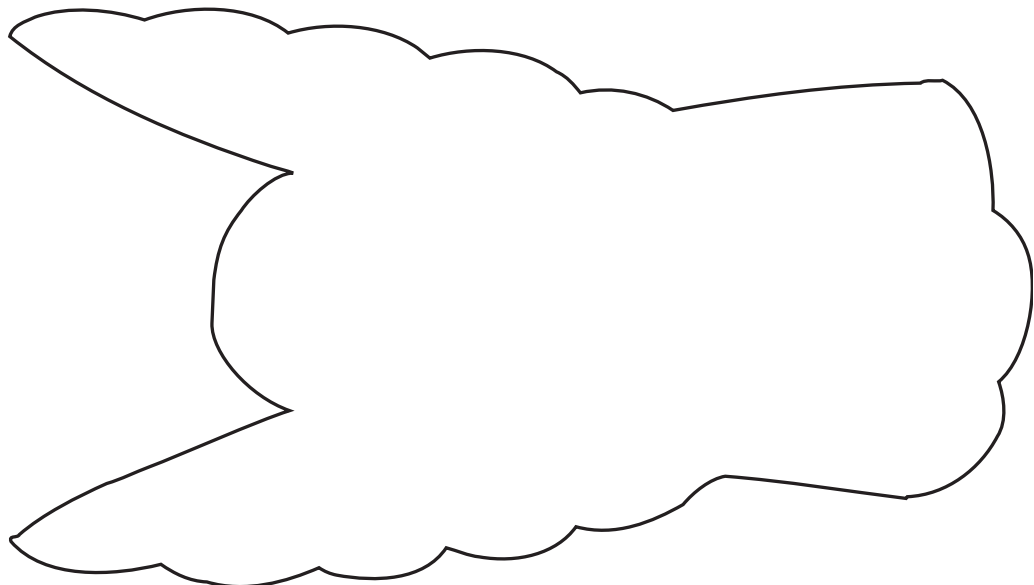


**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS
GOODNESS AND LOVE.**

Say that with me.

For Memory Verse activity on page 105.

To make an angel stick, copy and cut out the angel below and glue it to a tongue depressor or dowel.



Sharing the Lesson

“Good News” Paper

Say: **There are lots of ways to share God’s love with others. People who are not in our Sabbath School today have missed all the things we have done here, so let’s make a “Good News” paper to give to them. They did not hear the good news that we heard today. So we can make a paper to share our good news with them.**

Have the children write: “I love Jesus because _____” (fill in with words or pictures on the colored paper shapes, and then glue them to the open newspaper).

Plan to display the paper in the foyer or on a bulletin board in the hallway of the church.

Debriefing

Say: **Making our “Good News” paper is another way to tell others about God’s goodness and love. Can**

you think of other ways to live today’s message during the coming week?

(Make a card for your neighbor that praises God and shows pictures of what He has done for you; visit a nursing home and sing praise songs; tell a friend who needs help that God can help them, and then pray with them; read psalms from your Bible to a sick person, etc.)

Let’s say our message again:



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
TELL OTHERS ABOUT HIS
GOODNESS AND LOVE.**

Closing

Sing “God Is So Good” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13), verses 1 and 2. Then add a new verse: “I’ll tell the world (3x) / He’s so good to me.”

Pray that each child will have the courage this week to worship God by telling others about His goodness and love.

You Need:

- newspaper
- crayons, markers
- colored paper in various shapes and sizes

Look, He's Speechless!

References

Luke 1:5-23,
57-80; *The Desire of
Ages*, pp. 97-100

Memory Verse

"Praise be to the
Lord because
he has come to
his people and
redeemed them"
(Luke 1:68, NIV).

The Message

I worship God
when I tell
others about His
goodness and love.

Have you ever seen your pastor try to preach without a voice? If he couldn't speak because of a cold, what would he probably do? Yes, he would ask someone else to preach. Our Bible story is about a temple priest who had a message from God. But he couldn't speak. He had lost his voice!

In the hill country of Judea lived a priest named Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth. They loved God very, very much. Their biggest wish was to have a child of their own. But they had never had any children. And now they were too old.

When it was his turn, Zechariah went to the temple to serve as priest for the day. He was in the temple burning incense and praying for the people of Israel. Many people were outside in the courtyard praying at the same time. Suddenly an angel came and stood beside the incense altar!

At first Zechariah was confused and frightened. But the angel said, "Zechariah, don't be afraid. Your prayer has been heard by God. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to a son. You will name him John. . . . Many people will be happy because of His birth. . . . He will help many people . . . return to the Lord" (Luke 1:13-16, ICB).

"How can I know that what you say is true? I am an old man, and my wife is old, too," Zechariah questioned the angel" (Luke 1:18, ICB).

The angel answered, "God sent me to talk to you and to tell you this good news. . . . You will lose your speech because you did not believe what I told you. But these things will really happen" (Luke 1:19, 20, ICB). Then the angel disappeared.

The people waiting in the courtyard worried about

Zechariah. He had been inside for a long time. Finally he went out to face the praying people. When he couldn't speak to them, they knew that He had had a vision from God.

Zechariah finished his work at the temple and went home. He tried to tell Elizabeth all that happened. But it wasn't easy, because he couldn't talk.

Several months later their baby was born. The neighbors rejoiced with them. Some thought the baby should be named Zechariah after his father. But Zechariah had a message for them. "His name is John," Zechariah wrote so they could read it (Luke 1:63, ICB). Immediately, his voice returned and he praised God. The baby was named John, just as the angel had said. Then Zechariah praised God so much that all the neighbors talked about it!

This is the song of praise that Zechariah sang to tell his neighbors about this special child:

"Let us thank the Lord, the God of Israel.

"God has come to help his people and has given them freedom.

"God has given us a powerful Savior from the family of God's servant David.

"God said that he would do this. He said it through his holy prophets who lived long ago.

"God will save us from our enemies and from the power of all those who hate us.

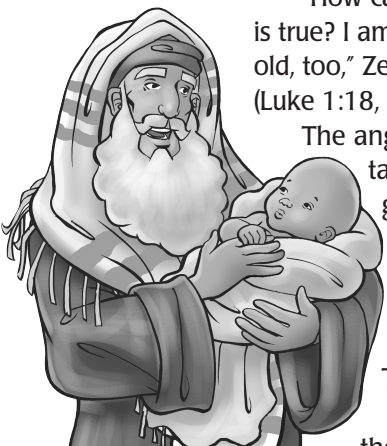
"God said he would give mercy to our ancestors. And he remembered his holy promise.

"God promised Abraham, our father, that he would free us from the power of our enemies, so that we could serve him without fear.

"We will be righteous and holy before God as long as we live.

"Now you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High God.

"You will go first before the Lord to prepare the people for his coming.



"You will make his people know that they will be saved. They will be saved by having their sins forgiven.

"With the loving mercy of our God, a new day from heaven will shine upon us.

"God will help those who live in darkness, in the fear of death.

"He will guide us into the path that goes toward peace" (Luke 1:68-79, ICB).

Zechariah shared his praise and his love for God with his neighbors. We too can tell others about God's wonderful goodness and love. That is one way to worship Him.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- Take a nature walk with your family. Listen for bird songs and enjoy their praise to God. Try to identify the birds you hear.
- Read your Bible lesson story together. Sing "Sing Praises to the Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 2).
- Praise God for someone in your family. Tell Him what they mean to you. Tell them what you appreciate about them.
- Read and discuss Luke 1:68 with your family.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss Luke 1:5-10. Ask a mother how old she was when her first child was born. About how old do you think Elizabeth was?
- Draw a large heart and write the memory verse on it. Around the edge of the heart, write things for which you want to praise God. Say the memory verse together. Sing a praise song before prayer. Thank God for your family.

Monday

- Together with your family, read and discuss Luke 1:11-19. Who was Gabriel? (verse 19). Draw a picture of what you think Gabriel looked like. Read about two other people to whom Gabriel brought messages from God: Daniel 9:21, 22; Luke 1:26-28. Write their names. _____ and _____
- Does God still send messages to His people today? How do you know?
- Say your memory verse before prayer.

Tuesday

- Read Luke 1:20-25 for family worship. For two minutes, don't say anything out loud to your family. You may move your lips, use your hands, or write notes. But you must not make a

sound. What will your next words be when you speak again?

- Tell what you were thinking during the silent two minutes. Thank God for the gift of speech.
- Say your memory verse together before prayer.

Wednesday

- With your family, read and discuss Luke 1:57-66. Apparently Zechariah was also deaf. How do you know? (See verse 62.) Using hand signals, try to ask, "What is his name?" Write Zechariah's answer (verse 63). _____
- When he could speak again, Zechariah's first words were praises to God. Sing a praise song. Then say out loud two things for which you praise God. Thank God for the gift of hearing.
- Say your memory verse without help.

Thursday

- Read and discuss Luke 1:67-75 for family worship. Who helped Zechariah to praise God? (verse 67)
- Make some instruments from cups containing dry beans. Seal with plastic wrap. Also use spoons and pans, plastic bottles, etc.
- Make up a tune for your memory verse and sing it. Sing it again as you play your instruments. Thank God for music.

Friday

- Mime this week's Bible story. Hold the baby "John" (a doll) as you and your family read Luke 1:76-80 out loud. What do these verses mean to you? What do you want to be when you grow up?
- Start (or continue) a "Blessing Book" for your family. Add pictures of what God has done for your family.
- Sing "Bless His Holy Name" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 9). Then, thank God for His blessings.



References

Luke 1:26-56;
The Desire of Ages,
 p. 81 (paragraph 6),
 p. 82 (paragraph 1); *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1128



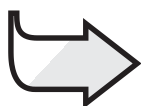
Memory Verse

"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46, 47, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that telling others about their love for God is a part of worshipping Him.
Feel eager and prepared to tell others about their personal love for God.
Respond by sharing their love for God with those around them.



The Message

I worship God when I tell others about my love for Him.

Can't Wait to Tell!

Monthly Theme

Worshipping is sharing our love for Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The angel Gabriel visits Mary and tells her of God's plan for her life, that she will be the mother of Jesus. Mary is both troubled and amazed. Gabriel tells her that her elderly relative, Elizabeth, will also have a child. Mary goes to visit Elizabeth, who pronounces a blessing upon Mary, saying, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" (Luke 1:42, NIV). Mary responds with beautiful words of praise.

This is a lesson about worship.

Both Mary and Elizabeth had much for which to praise God. And they shared their wonderful news with each other as an act of worship. Mary's song of praise (known to many Christians as *The Magnificat*) tells of her personal love for God, and her praise to Him for the great things He has done for her. *The Magnificat* still inspires people around the world today.

Teacher Enrichment

"Opinion differs as to whether the expression 'of the house of David' [Luke 1:26, 27, KJV] . . . refers to Mary or to Joseph. The repetition of the word 'virgin' in the last clause of the verse implies that the phrase in question refers to Joseph rather than Mary. In any event, Joseph's Davidic descent is clearly stated in Luke 2:4. But Mary was also 'of the house of David' (Matt. 1:16; Luke 1:32; DA 44). It was through Mary that Jesus was literally 'of the seed of David according to the flesh' (Rom. 1:3). That Mary was a descendant of David seems to be taken for granted in Luke 1:32, 69. These and other statements of Scripture would lose much of their force and meaning unless Mary could claim David as an ancestor" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 679, 680).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 10.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>A Secret</i> B. <i>God's Graffiti</i>	Bible Bible, large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10, pencils, markers, crayons, baby pictures (optional)
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!" none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	three children to act out the story, Bible-times costumes (including an angel robe), padding to simulate pregnancy (optional) three helpers Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Pass It On!</i>	none
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Angel Bookmark</i>	angel bookmarks (see p. 152), crayons, markers, pencils

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible

A. A Secret

Allow the children to come forward one at a time. Whisper an emotion word to them. Emotions may include: sadness, happiness, love, fear, excitement, shyness, loneliness, etc. Each child will take their turn acting out the emotion until someone is able to guess what their secret emotion is.

Debriefing

Ask: **How hard is it for you to keep a secret?** (hard, not so hard) **How did the others know what your secret emotion was?** (I told it by acting it out.) **A young woman had a joyful secret that she couldn't wait to tell her cousin. Our memory verse tells how she felt.** Read Luke 1:46, 47 aloud. **God has done such wonderful things for us. Let's tell the world! Our message today says . . .**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT MY LOVE FOR HIM.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10
- pencils, markers, crayons
- baby pictures (optional)

B. God's Graffiti

Continue adding pictures, color, and words of praise to the wall banner you started last week. Encourage the children to write something about their personal love for God. Optional: In advance, arrange with parents for children to bring baby pictures to add to the banner. NOTE: THIS BANNER WILL BE USED AGAIN NEXT WEEK.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy making and adding more to the banner today?** (Wait for responses.) **What pictures or words of praise did you add to the banner?** (Wait for responses.) [If it applies, ask: **What did you express by putting your baby picture on the banner?** (that God loves me and has been taking care of me since I was a baby, I want to praise Him)] **Did you write something about how you feel about God?** (yes, no) **Our memory verse tells us how a young mother-to-be felt about God.** Read aloud Luke 1:46, 47. **Mary told others what God had done for her. We want to do that too. Our message for today says . . .**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT MY LOVE FOR HIM.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Holy, Holy" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 6)
- "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)
- "Lord, We Praise You" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 17)
- "Father, I Adore You" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 21)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **We worship and praise God when we tell others about our love for Him. We also tell of our love for Him by giving Him an offering.**

You Need:

- container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!"



Prayer

Take prayer requests. Then allow time for silent prayer when each child can tell God about their love for Him. Ask one or two volunteers to pray out loud after the silent prayer.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- three children to act out the story
- Bible-times costumes (including an angel robe)
- padding to simulate pregnancy (optional)

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Mary, Gabriel, Elizabeth

Props: Bible-times costumes (including an angel robe)

Your actors will act out the story as you read it to the class. Prompt them at the appropriate times. Introduce the story by saying the following:

Good morning, everyone. I am so excited! I have a special secret, and I can't wait to hear you tell me what it is! Who knows? (Allow time.) Doesn't anyone know what my secret is? (Act disappointed.) I haven't told anyone, but I still expected that someone here would already know it. After all, in our story today, Mary had a special secret that she hadn't told anyone yet either. But as soon as she went to see her cousin Elizabeth, her cousin said she already knew what the secret was! Let's find out what else happened.

Read or tell the story.

Plans were being made for the wedding of young Mary and her husband-to-be, Joseph. Joseph was a good man. Both Mary and Joseph were descended from King David. *[Bring Mary to the front.]*

Mary may have been thinking about how many date cakes she had to make before the wedding, and how much grape juice she and her mother would have to prepare for the feast. We'll never know just what Mary was thinking or doing that day, when she saw an angel in the room with her. *[Mary turns around and sees Gabriel.]* The Bible says it was Gabriel, the same angel who visited Zechariah.

But Gabriel never told Mary his name. He just gave her a message. *[Gabriel gestures and moves his lips as you read his message.]* "Congratulations, favored lady! The Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28, TLB).

Mary wondered what the angel was talking about. *[Mary puts her hand to her chin.]* Maybe she didn't know what he meant by the words "favored lady."

Gabriel went on.

"Don't be frightened, Mary," he said. "God is pleased with you and He has chosen to bless you wonderfully! Very soon you will become pregnant and have a baby boy. You are to name the baby Jesus." Gabriel gave Mary the promise that this Baby would save His people from their sins and would reign over Israel forever. Then Gabriel told Mary about her cousin, Elizabeth, who was also pregnant with a miracle baby. Elizabeth's baby would be born in just three months.

Mary was worried about what Joseph would think when he found out she was going to have a baby, since they weren't married yet. *[Mary shakes her head.]* But before the angel disappeared, she told him *[Mary talks to angel]*, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to do whatever he wants. May everything you said come true" (Luke 1:38, TLB). *[Gabriel "disappears."]*

After Gabriel left, Mary must have sat down to think over the news *[Mary sits down and thinks]* and how she would tell Joseph. It may have been hard to believe she had actually spoken with an angel! It was incredible that her cousin Elizabeth was also pregnant; Elizabeth was so old! Quickly Mary decided to visit Elizabeth and talk to her about the angel's visit. Having experienced a miracle herself, Elizabeth would understand how frightening and yet exciting it was. Mary gathered a few things together and took a

trip alone to see Elizabeth. *[Mary “picks” and walks to another part of the room.]*

[Bring Elizabeth to the front.] Elizabeth was large and round with the growing baby. She heard a knock at the door and walked slowly to open it. *[Elizabeth goes to the imaginary door to meet Mary.]* She heard a voice on the other side call out, “Elizabeth?” and recognized the voice of Mary.

All at once, the baby kicked and squirmed inside her. *[Elizabeth looks surprised as she holds her padded stomach.]* Elizabeth threw open the door and welcomed her cousin, giving Mary a huge hug. *[Elizabeth opens the imaginary door and joyfully hugs Mary.]* “The baby inside me just jumped for joy!” she said happily.

Then she said to Mary, “You are favored by God above all other women, and your child is destined for God’s mightiest praise. What an honor this is, that the mother of my Lord should visit me!” (Luke 1:42, 43, TLB).

And Mary said *[Mary gestures and smiles as you read the following],*

“My heart praises the Lord;
my soul is glad because of God my Savior,
for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!

From now on all people will call me happy,

because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me” (Luke 1:46-49, TEV).

The two women sat down together and shared with each other their trust in God. *[Mary and Elizabeth sit down and mime talking.]* Mary must have believed even more that her Baby was a miracle baby, since her cousin knew about it before Mary even told her.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. She left just before Elizabeth’s baby, John, was born. But when she went home, she must have felt that no matter

what anyone said about her Baby, it was a very special baby and these were very special times for her and Joseph.

Elizabeth’s worship and trust in God made Mary’s faith even stronger. That’s how it is with telling others that you trust God and love Him: both you and the other people love God even more. Worshiping God aloud helps everyone.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you think Mary felt when Elizabeth blessed her and told her that she was chosen by God for something really special?** (happy, better than before, excited, close to God)

What made Mary speak such wonderful words that told of her love for God? (the Holy Spirit) **Do you ever feel as if you can’t keep silent about your love for God?** (yes, sometimes)

Say: **Like Mary and Elizabeth, don’t keep it inside. Let the world know! The Holy Spirit will help you. Remember our message:**



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL
OTHERS ABOUT MY LOVE
FOR HIM.**

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Prepare in advance: Have three helpers waiting outside the room for your signal. As you begin to tell the children something, signal one helper to burst into the room and say, “Stop, wait, I have something that I just can’t wait to tell you. It is so exciting I just have to say it now: ‘My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior!’” (Luke 1:46, 47, NIV).

The helper then runs out of the room. Repeat the scenario twice more with two other helpers. Then say: **Well, I guess those are some pretty important words if three people couldn’t wait to**

You Need:

- three helpers (not class members)

share them with us. Let's see if we can learn them so that we can be ready to share them with someone else.

Repeat the memory verse ("My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" [Luke 1:46, 47, NIV]). until the children can say it without help.

You Need:

- Bibles

Bible Study

Have the children look up the texts in the box below to review the times angels were involved with the families of Mary and Elizabeth. Ask them to discover who received the message and what the angel told them, and be ready to share it with the class.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think you would do if God sent an angel to see you and give you a message? How would you feel?** (scared at first; very loved; excited; closer to God; wanting to tell someone about it)

How do you think God must feel when you send Him messages that you love Him? (happy) **How do you think God feels when you tell others about your love for Him?** (also very happy) **That is what Mary did after the angel visited her. Remember . . .**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT MY LOVE FOR HIM.

Text:	Who received the angel's message:	What the angel told them:
Luke 1:8-13	Zechariah	His wife, Elizabeth, would bear a son, and they were to name him John.
Luke 1:26-31	Mary	Mary would give birth to a son, and she was to name Him Jesus.
Matthew 1:18-21	Joseph	Don't be afraid to marry Mary.

3

Applying the Lesson

Pass It On!

Have the children form a circle. Tell them that the object of this activity is to make sure that every word comes around the circle exactly as you say it to the first person.

Quietly whisper a short message about your love for God, such as: "I love Jesus more than anything"; "God is so good to me"; or "Jesus is my best friend." Each child should quietly whisper the exact message into the ear of the next person until the final child whispers the message to the teacher, who then says it aloud.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you enjoy sharing your message about your love for God with the person next to you? (yes) Did the message get mixed up?** Wait for response.

Say: **When we tell others about our love for God, they may pass it on to someone else, and soon many people will hear about how wonderful God is. This is one way to worship God.**

Ask: **Do you have something about your love for God that you can share with someone? What is it?** (Allow each child to answer that question privately.) **What is our message?**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT MY LOVE FOR HIM.

Say that with me.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Angel Bookmark

In advance, prepare angel bookmark cutouts (see page 152). Distribute markers and/or pencils. Each child should color and decorate their bookmark, writing on the back a message about their love for Jesus. Provide help where needed.

Debriefing

Ask: **What are angels?** (messengers for God) **Who else can be God's messengers?** (We can.) **Be a messenger this week and give away your bookmark to someone you want to tell about**

God's love. When they read your message about loving God, they might want to worship Him too.

Always remember that ...



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I TELL OTHERS ABOUT MY LOVE FOR HIM.

Say that with me.

Closing

Let each child silently join you in praying that God will provide the perfect time and place for them to share their angel bookmark and their love for Him.

You Need:

- angel bookmark cutouts (see p. 152)
- crayons, markers, pencils

Can't Wait to Tell!

References

Luke 1:26-56; *The Desire of Ages*, p. 81 (paragraph 6), p. 82 (paragraph 1); *The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1128

Natasha had just learned to love and worship God. In some meetings that were held in her city, she learned that God had a special plan for her life. How happy she was! She couldn't wait to tell her family and friends about God's love! A long time ago another woman also wanted to share her love for God.

Memory Verse

"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46, 47, NIV).

The Message

I worship God when I tell others about my love for Him.

Wedding plans were being made for Mary, a young woman, and Joseph, her husband-to-be. Mary may have been thinking of how many date cakes she had to make before the wedding. Or how much grape juice would be needed for the feast.

We'll never know just what Mary was thinking or doing that day. We do know she suddenly saw an angel in the room with her. The Bible says it was Gabriel, the same angel who visited Zechariah (Luke 1:26). But Gabriel didn't tell Mary his name. The angel went to her and said, "Congratulations, favored lady! The Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28, TLB).

Mary was troubled and confused. She wondered what the angel was talking about.

"Don't be frightened, Mary," he said. "God is pleased with you! Very soon you will become pregnant. You will have a baby boy, and you are to name the baby Jesus." (See Luke 1:30-32.) And then Gabriel told Mary about her cousin Elizabeth, who was also expecting a miracle baby. Elizabeth's baby was to be born in just three months.

Before the angel disappeared, Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am

willing to do whatever He wants. May everything you said come true" (Luke 1:38, TLB).

After Gabriel left, Mary must have sat down to think about this news. It was probably hard to believe she had actually spoken with an angel! And it was hard to believe that her cousin Elizabeth was pregnant! Elizabeth was so old!

Mary decided to visit Elizabeth. She wanted to talk to her about the angel's visit. Perhaps Elizabeth would understand how frightening and yet exciting it was. So Mary gathered a few things together and went to see Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was large and round with the growing baby. As soon as she heard Mary's voice, her baby kicked and squirmed inside her. Elizabeth welcomed her cousin, giving Mary a huge hug. "The baby inside me just jumped for joy!" she said happily.

Then she said to Mary, "You are favored by God above all other women, and your child is destined for God's mightiest praise. What an honor this is, that the mother of my Lord should visit me!" (Luke 1:42, 43, TLB).

And Mary said, "My heart praises the Lord; my soul is glad because of God my Savior, for he has remembered me, his lowly servant!"

"From now on all people will call me happy, because of the great things the Mighty God has done for me" (Luke 1:46-49, TEV).

The two women sat down together. They shared with each other their trust in God. Mary must have been surprised because Elizabeth knew about Mary's Baby before Mary could tell her.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three



months. She left just before Elizabeth's baby, John, was born. Mary must have believed that her own Baby was a very special baby too. And these were special times for her and Joseph.

Elizabeth's trust in God made Mary's faith even stronger. That's how it is with telling others that you trust God and love Him. Both you and the other people love God even more. Worshipping God aloud helps everyone.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, look for something that you really like in God's outdoors: a beautiful flower, leaf, waterfall, bird, etc. (If the weather is bad, look in nature books.) Have a "praise God" time. Tell or show each other what you found, and why you like it. Then, sing praise songs together. Thank God for beauty in nature.
- Read your Bible lesson story together. Close family worship by reading Luke 1:46, 47.

Sunday

- Read and discuss Luke 1:26-38 during family worship.
- Sing "Praise Him" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 15).
- Draw a pair of lips to represent the way we praise God with our voices. Copy the memory verse onto the lips and put it where you will see it every day. Ask God to help you speak only words of praise.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Luke 1:39-45. Baby John jumped for joy before he was born. Why?
- Other creatures that God has made also jump. Name some. Learn two new things about one. Jump like it. Draw a picture, or make it from clay.
- Say your memory verse without help.
- Sing "Make a Joyful Noise Unto the Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 18) before prayer.

Tuesday

- For family worship, read and discuss Luke 1:46-55. Say Mary's song in your own words. Draw a picture about the song. Make your memory verse into a praise song to Jesus. Sing it with rhythm instruments.
- Today would be a good day to give away the angel bookmark that you made in Sabbath

School. (If you were not in Sabbath School, make a bookmark in the shape of an angel and write on the back a message about your love for Jesus.)

Wednesday

- During family worship, read and discuss Luke 1:24, 26. How long had John been growing inside his mother when Mary was visited by the angel? _____ months. Read Luke 1:56. How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth? _____ months. Count that many months on a calendar. What will you be doing then?
- Sing your memory verse. Then say it in your own words. Thank God for babies.

Thursday

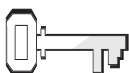
- With your family, read Luke 1:26 and 1:39 again. Look at a Bible map together. Circle the country and town where the angel visited Mary. Find the place where Elizabeth lived. Use the map scale to determine how far Mary traveled to see Elizabeth. Mary made this trip all alone to share the good news about Jesus. Where will you go to tell others about Him? Is your memory verse a good way to tell others about Jesus?
- Pray for people who travel to tell others about Jesus.

Friday

- For family worship, prepare a broadcast about Mary's good news. Use a tape recorder or video camera, if available. Report on the Bible story as it happens. Ask a member of your family to be an "eyewitness." Have them tell what they saw as the story unfolded. Then have someone be a commentator and tell what the story means to them. Then watch or listen to the recording.*
- Mary told others about her love for God. Have you done the same? Read together Psalm 34:3. Then sing your memory verse.

*Adapted from Lisa Flin and Barbara Younger, *Making Scripture Stick* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Books, 1992), pp. 94, 95.

Do You Hear What I Hear?



References

Luke 2:1-14; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 43-48



Memory Verse

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14, KJV).



Objectives

The children will:

Know that they worship Jesus when they listen to sermons, songs, and other messages about Him.

Feel a longing to learn more good news about Jesus at worship time.

Respond by carefully listening to sermons, songs, and other messages about Jesus so they will know Him better.



The Message

I worship God when I listen to the good news about Jesus.

Monthly Theme

Worshipping is sharing our love for Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

While shepherds are watching their sheep one night, an angel of the Lord suddenly appears and frightens them. The angel tells them not to be afraid, that he is bringing them the good news of Jesus' birth and where they can find Him. Then many angels sing "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14, KJV).

This is a lesson about worship.

The shepherds listened and worshipped as angels heralded the birth of Jesus. So in attending worship services, family worship, and Bible studies we may hear the good news about Jesus. To listen and learn of Jesus are acts of worship, deepening our love relationship with Him and preparing us for another act of worship: sharing the good news with others.

Teacher Enrichment

"The Jewish nation had been preserved as a witness that Christ was to be born of the seed of Abraham and of David's line; yet they knew not that His coming was now at hand. . . . Above the hills of Bethlehem are gathered an innumerable throng of angels. They wait the signal to declare the glad news to the world. Had the leaders in Israel been true to their trust, they might have shared the joy of heralding the birth of Jesus. But now they are passed by" (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 44-47).

Instead, "Jesus' birth was announced to shepherds in the fields. These may have been the shepherds who supplied the lambs for the temple sacrifices that were performed for the forgiveness of sin. Here the angels invited these shepherds to greet the Lamb of God (John 1:36), who would take away the sins of the world forever" (*Life Application Study Bible*, Notes and Bible Helps on Luke 2:8 [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005], p. 1665).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 10.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Angel Messenger</i> B. <i>God's Graffiti</i>	Bibles, large poster board angel, (optional angels [see p. 153]), ceiling hook, nylon thread, glitter, markers, silver or gold material, gold rickrack (optional), glue large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10, pencils, markers, crayons
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container decorated with musical notes and the words, "Praise Him!" <i>Sing for Joy</i> songbooks
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bibles, Bible-times costumes for shepherds and angels, children to act out the story, sheep (stuffed toy, papier mâché, or drawn on poster board and cut out), shepherds rods, spotlight, <i>Sing for Joy</i> songbook, stable scene, Luke 2:10, 12 on paper wire coat hangers, angel pattern (see p. 153), small wooden beads or lumps of clay, pipe cleaners or wire, construction paper, glue, scissors, black thread Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>My Listening Plans</i>	paper, pencils, chalkboard or whiteboard, chalk or dry-erase marker
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Amazing Messages</i>	dark-colored construction paper, small paintbrushes, teaspoon, cups, water, salt, access to an oven

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bibles
- large poster board angel
- optional angels (see p. 153)
- ceiling hook
- nylon thread
- glitter
- markers
- silver or gold material
- gold rickrack (optional)
- glue

A. Angel Messenger

In advance, fasten the hook to the ceiling. Have the children color and decorate a large angel you have cut from poster board. Attach the nylon thread to the angel, lace the thread through the hook, and let the children take turns lowering and raising the angel. (Optional: Distribute copies of the angel on page 153 and have the children decorate them and then use them to form a collage.)

Debriefing

Ask: **Of what do angels remind you?** (messengers from God, protection, heaven, etc.) **What might our story be about today?** (don't know, angels telling about Jesus' birth, etc.) **Let's read our memory verse, Luke 2:14, to find out what one group of angel messengers had to say.** Read aloud. **When God sends messages, it is our job to listen to them. How do we worship God? Today's message says:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I LISTEN TO THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10
- pencils, markers, crayons

B. God's Graffiti

Have the children continue adding pictures, color, and praise to the wall banner started in Lesson 10. Suggest they draw angels today.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you like our banner now?** (It's getting prettier, etc.) Take time to talk about the things the children have added. **Today's story is about a message from God about Jesus that some shepherds heard. On your banner, write something about praising God for sending messages to us. Then let's say what we are to do with God's messages. And here's our message for today:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I LISTEN TO THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 71 or 72)

"Joy to the World" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 81)

"There's a Song in the Air" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 82)

"Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 83)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **Our offering today will help others to hear the good news about Jesus.**

You Need:

- container decorated with musical notes, and the words "Praise Him!"



Prayer

Ask for prayer requests and choose a volunteer to pray. Then say: **Our lesson today tells of many angels who sang a message of praise to God for sending Jesus. "Singing is as much an act of worship as is prayer. Indeed, many a song is prayer" (Child Guidance, p. 523). Let's sing a praise prayer together after (name of volunteer) prays for our prayer requests.** Possible praise prayers: "All Praise to Thee," verse 2 (*Sing for Joy*, no. 19) or "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 10).

You Need:

- *Sing for Joy* songbooks

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bibles
- Bible-times costumes for shepherds and angels
- children to act out the story
- sheep (stuffed toy, papier mâché, or drawn on poster board and cut out)
- shepherds' rods
- spotlight
- *Sing for Joy* songbook
- stable scene
- Luke 2:10, 12 on paper

Experiencing the Story

Characters: shepherds, angels

Props: Bible-times costumes, robes for several angels, shepherds' crooks, toy sheep, stable scene in one corner

Your actors will act out the story as you read it to the class. Prompt them at the appropriate times. You might want to invite the Kindergarten class to watch your story time. At designated places in the story, have the children sing carols.

Read or tell the story.

[Have the shepherds and toy sheep sit a distance away from the stable. One angel sits to the side, away from the others.]

One of the hardest things about being a shepherd was staying out in the fields all night with the sheep. The shepherds weren't supposed to sleep because coyotes or bears might come and attack. It was a big responsibility.

One night a group of shepherds were sitting together, watching the sky and listening for any sound of approaching danger. *[Shepherds watch sky and act frightened. Shine spotlight on lone angel.]* All at once they saw a glowing being, an angel, in front of them, so bright they couldn't look at it. The place where they sat was surrounded by a glowing circle called the "glory of the Lord." The shepherds were terrified. They must have thought they were dreaming!

The angel began speaking and told them *[angel reads the following quote from a separate sheet of paper: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David (Bethlehem) a Savior has been born*

to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:10-12, NIV)].

[Have group dressed as angels stand up, join the single angel, and smile. Shine spotlight on them.]

Before the shepherds could blink, a huge choir of angels appeared in the sky, praising God and singing a wonderful song that must have echoed from hill to hill. *[Have everyone sing "There's a Song in the Air," verses 1 and 3 (Sing for Joy, no. 82).]* They sang of another promise—a promise of peace to all those who honored God. *[Spotlight goes off. Angels sit down.]*

And then, suddenly, the light was gone, and the angels were gone. The shepherds' ears must have rung in the silence. They looked at each other. All thoughts of being with the sheep were gone. This was wonderful news! The angel had told them to find the Baby. They had to go now!

[Shepherds stay where they are and sing "O Come, All Ye Faithful," verse 2 (Sing for Joy, no. 70). Everyone sings with the shepherds.]

Debriefing

Ask: **Why were the shepherds on the hillside?** (to protect their sheep) **What did they see?** (bright light; angel; etc.) **How did they react?** (frightened at first, then happy)

How would you have acted if you had been with the shepherds when the angels gave the message about Jesus? (not wanting to miss anything; excited, scared, happy, etc.)

What do you think when you hear messages about Jesus at Sabbath School, church, school, and home? (I want to hear the good news about Jesus;

sometimes I don't pay attention; etc.)

Say: **God still sends messages to people today about Jesus. You can hear about Jesus at Sabbath School, church service, family worship, and Bible class in school. Can you think of any other ways you can find messages about Jesus?** (In nature; when I study my Bible; when I go to other meetings, such as Pathfinders, evangelistic meetings, etc.)

Like the shepherds, pay careful attention when the good news about Jesus is being told or sung.

Remember our message:



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I LISTEN TO THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

Memory Verse

Ahead of time, make five angels for each child as directed below. (See page 153.) (A simpler type angel could also be used. Adapt to your situation.)

Help the children write the group of words in the box below on their angels.

Have the children help hang the angels in order with black thread from

You Need:

- wire coat hanger for each child
- angel pattern (see p. 153)
- small wooden beads or lumps of clay
- pipe cleaners or thin wire
- construction paper
- glue
- scissors
- black thread

angel 1	Glory to God
angel 2	in the highest
angel 3	and on earth peace,
angel 4	good will toward men
angel 5	Luke 2:14

their coat hanger to create a mobile.

Have each child read the memory verse from his or her mobile; then have everyone say the verse together. Let the children take their mobiles home.

(Adapted from *Create: A Handbook for Teachers of Elementary Art* [Stevensville, Mich.: Educational Service, Inc., 1966], pp. 195, 196.)

Bible Study

Have the class members who read take turns reading from their Bibles about the events surrounding Jesus' birth in Luke 2:1-7. Ask: **What does your Bible say about Jesus before He became a baby? Let's read John 1:1-3, 14.**

Why did Baby Jesus, our Creator, come to live in our world? Read Matthew 1:21 aloud.

Debriefing

Ask: **Do you know any babies who created the world before they were born?** (no)

Say: **Your Creator really loves you. He went through a lot to save you from Satan. Listening and learning more about this good news is one way to worship God. Why?** (Learning about such love causes me to praise Him even more.)

We want to listen and learn all we can, so each of us can say:



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I LISTEN TO THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- pencils
- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or dry-erase marker

My Listening Plans

In advance, prepare a sheet of paper for each child by writing at the top of the paper "How I will listen to and learn about Jesus this week."

Ask the children to name ways they can learn the good news about Jesus. List their ideas on the board. Some ideas are: go to Sabbath School and church; have family worship; study the Bible; listen to people tell what Jesus means to them; etc.

Give each child a sheet of paper that has the following written on the top: "How I will listen to and learn about Jesus this week."

Ask them to draw pictures or write their ideas for doing this. Ask them to sign their name at the bottom to show that they want to learn more about Jesus this week.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask:

How many of you are already doing the things that you listed? You are fortunate to be able to hear the good news about Jesus very often. Listen and learn all you can, for this is very special news, and it will guide you to eternal life.

Why do some children not pay attention when the good news about Jesus is being shared? (Because they have their mind on other things, such as toys, activities; they love things more than Jesus; etc.)

What will you do when the good news is being shared in Sabbath School, church, and other places? (I will listen and pay attention, because . . .)



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I LISTEN TO THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

Sharing the Lesson

Amazing Messages

Give each child a sheet of dark-colored construction paper, a paintbrush, and a cup of water containing three teaspoons of salt.

The children have heard the good news about Jesus today. Ask them to create a scene that tells the news about Jesus' birth. Have them write their memory verse somewhere on the paper. Tell them to dip and stir with the brush before drawing each image or writing each letter.

While the children work, preheat the oven to 150 degrees F (70 degrees C). Bake the finished scenes for five minutes or until the papers dry. The images will appear as sparkling crystals on the dark paper.

If you don't have access to an oven at Sabbath School, have the children take their papers home with written instructions for baking them under the supervision of their parents.

(Adapted from *The Children's Workers Encyclopedia of Bible Teaching Ideas: New Testament* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, Inc., 1997], p. 59.)

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you think when I gave you salt water instead of paint?** (I thought that was strange.) **Were you surprised at how your messages turned out?** (yes)

How do you think the shepherds felt when they heard the message from the angels? (very surprised)

How would you have felt? (surprised, amazed)

Say: **The angels brought a surprising and amazing message to the shepherds that night. The surprised shepherds listened carefully and then shared the amazing good news with others.**

Ask: **Do you listen carefully to the good news about Jesus so that you can share it with others? Take your amazing crystal message home and give it to someone you'd like to tell about Jesus. If you listened carefully during Sabbath School, you will be able to tell the amazing story of Jesus' birth.**

Let's say our message one more time:



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I LISTEN TO THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT JESUS.

Closing

Say: **Let's pray that the people who listen to your story about Jesus will worship God because they listened to what you shared.** (Pray together.)

Remind the children to use their Bible study guides every day and to do the daily activities.

You Need:

- dark-colored construction paper
- small paintbrushes
- teaspoon
- disposable cups
- water
- salt
- access to an oven

Do You Hear What I Hear?

References

Luke 2:1-14; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 43-48

Memory Verse

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14, KJV).

The Message

I worship God when I listen to the good news about Jesus.

Have you ever been camping and slept out under the stars? Would you like to do that all the time, in all kinds of weather? Some people in our Bible story stayed outside most of the time. What were they doing there? Let's find out.

Once again, God's promises were true. Baby Jesus was born just as God's Word had said. "Out of Bethlehem," the prophet Micah had written 700 years before (see Micah 5:2). And that was where Mary and Joseph were when Jesus was born.

Because many others had also traveled to Bethlehem, all the inns and hotels were full. And so it was that Jesus was born in a stable. Mary wrapped Him in cloths and gently laid Him in a manger on a bed of hay. This was a strange birthplace for the King of the universe!

Angels watched over the little family. And at God's direction one went in the darkness of night to spread the good news.

On a nearby hillside some shepherds watched their sheep. One of the hardest things about being a shepherd was staying out in the fields all night. Wolves or bears might come, and all the sheep would scatter. So the shepherds had to stay awake. They had to be ready to scare away the wild animals. It was a huge responsibility.

As they watched their sheep, the

shepherds talked about the prophecies of old. *When will these things happen?* they wondered. *Surely it is time.*

All at once they saw a glowing being. An angel appeared to them, a being so bright they couldn't look at it! The place where they sat was filled with a glowing circle called the "glory of the Lord." The dazzling white light lay on the grass, on the sheep, on everything around them. They were terrified. This was even more frightening than fighting off bears!

The angel began to speak. "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David [Bethlehem] a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you:

You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger" (Luke 2:10-12, NIV).

Before the shepherds could blink, a huge choir of angels appeared in the sky. What a beautiful sight! The angels praised God and sang a wonderful song that must have echoed from hill to hill. They sang of another promise—a promise of peace to all those who honored God.

"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14, KJV).

Then, suddenly, the light was gone. The angels were gone. The shepherds' ears must have rung in the silence. They looked at each other. All thoughts of staying with the sheep were gone. This was wonderful news! The angel had told them where to find the Baby. They had to go now!



Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If it is a sunny day, walk in the sunshine with your family. Find a place to sit and read your Bible story. Look toward the sun and quickly look away. (Do NOT stare at the sun!) How is the bright sun like the light the shepherds saw the night the angels came to them?
- Read Luke 2:14 together; then, shout it.
- Sing together "Joy to the World" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 81). Thank God for sending Jesus to save us.

Sunday

- During family worship, read and discuss Luke 2:1-5.
- Make a "TV newscast" covering Jesus' birth to be "aired" during worship this Friday and next. Have your family help you cut two slits on the front of a box the size of a TV. The distance between the slits should be the length of the paper and a little longer than each picture in your newscast. Cut out the back of the box. Draw and color a picture of Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem. Write "Mary and Joseph are going to Bethlehem" on it. Set aside your picture and "TV" for tomorrow.
- Use your memory verse words in a song of praise.

Monday

- With your family, read and discuss Luke 2:6, 7.
- Today, make a picture of Mary with Joseph standing near Baby Jesus in the manger. Write "Jesus is born!" on your picture. Glue or tape yesterday's picture to this one to make a picture strip. Save it for tomorrow.
- Ask your parents where you were born. Do they have a picture of the place?
- Sing your memory verse before prayer.

Tuesday

- Read and discuss Luke 2:8-12 with your family.
- Draw and color two more pictures for your "TV newscast": (1) the shepherds in the field with their sheep at night; and (2) the angel telling

the shepherds about Jesus' birth. Write "The shepherds are in the field" on the first and "An angel is bringing good news" on the second. Glue or tape your pictures in order to yesterday's pictures.

- Look in a book and learn three new things about sheep.
- Sing your memory verse; then, thank God for angels who shared the good news.

Wednesday

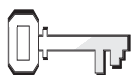
- Read and discuss Luke 2:13, 14 for family worship.
- For your "TV newscast," draw the angel choir singing to the shepherds. Write your memory verse on your picture. Glue or tape it to the end of yesterday's pictures.
- Take a large sheet of aluminum foil (about 2 feet [.6 meters] long). Crumple and mold the foil into a shiny angel. Thank Jesus for angels.

Thursday

- Listen while a member of your family reads John 3:16. What does that verse mean to you?
- Think of a relative or friend with whom to share the good news about Jesus' birth. Make and mail a card for that person. On it, write your memory verse and a joyful message from your family. Everyone in your family should sign it.
- Sing your memory verse. Then sing "Now Is Born the Divine Christ Child" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 78). Thank God for the good news of Jesus' birth.

Friday

- For worship, show your "TV newscast" about this week's Bible story. Operate your "TV" as follows: Feed your picture strip through the left slit (from the back of the box). Pull it over the "TV screen" and feed it into the right slit. Tell the story of your pictures as you pull the picture strip through. End your newscast by singing your memory verse. Save your picture strip for next week.
- Sing Christmas carols after your "newscast." Then thank Jesus for coming to save you.



References

Luke 2:15-20; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 47, 48



Memory Verse

"When they had seen him, they spread the word" (Luke 2:17, NIV).

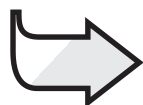


Objectives

The children will:
Know that they worship Jesus when they share their joy about His birth.

Feel joyful that Jesus came to save us, and that we can tell others this good news.

Respond by telling someone about Jesus' birth and what it means to us.



The Message

I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.

Spread the Joy

Monthly Theme

Worshipping is sharing our love for Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

After the angels go back to heaven, the shepherds leave immediately for Bethlehem and find Baby Jesus in a manger. After seeing Jesus for themselves they "spread the word" about their experience with the angels and Baby Jesus. All who hear are amazed. Mary treasures these things and ponders them in her heart.

This is a lesson about worship.

The shepherds left the ground made holy by the angelic visitors and went to see for themselves He of whom the angels sang. We too should have the worship experiences of listening, seeing Jesus for ourselves, and then spreading what we receive after seeing Him.

Teacher Enrichment

"Heaven and earth are no wider apart today than when the shepherds listened to the angels' song. Humanity is still as much the object of heaven's solicitude as when common men of common occupations met angels at noonday, and talked with the heavenly messengers in the vineyards and the fields. To us in the common walks of life, heaven may be very near. Angels from the courts above will attend the steps of those who come and go at God's command" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 48).

"What a birth announcement! . . . First the shepherds ran to see the baby; then they spread the word. Jesus is *your* Messiah, *your* Savior. Do you look forward to meeting him in prayer and in his Word each day? Have you discovered a Lord so wonderful that you can't help sharing your joy with your friends?" (*Life Application Study Bible*, Notes and Bible Helps on Luke 2:8-15 [NIV] [Wheaton, Ill.: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2005], p. 1665).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 10.

Program Overview

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Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Animals, Animals</i> B. <i>God's Graffiti</i>	Bible, paper, pen large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10, pencils, markers, crayons
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbooks Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!" manger cutout for each child (see p. 154)
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	stable scene with hay, etc.; Bible-times costumes for shepherds, angels, Joseph, Mary; swaddling clothes (cloths) for "Baby Jesus"; parents with a newborn (if possible) or a male baby doll; children to act out the story; sheep (stuffed toy, papier mâché, or drawn on poster board and cut out); <i>Sing for Joy</i> songbook baby in cloths from "Experiencing the Story," memory verse written on small piece of paper Bibles, five slips of paper, chalkboard or dry-erase board, chalk or dry-erase markers
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Through Their Eyes</i>	large cardboard box, pieces of cardboard or soft wood, hay or straw, glue, crayons, markers, scissors, photocopies of line drawings of cows, horses, donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, angels (see p. 147)
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Jesus' Birth Announcement</i>	paper, crayons, markers, pencils

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.



Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- paper
- pen

A. Animals, Animals

In advance, write the following words on slips of paper, one word on each. Fold the papers and put them in a bowl or basket.

cow horse goat chicken duck donkey sheep

Form seven groups. Have a child from each group, one at a time, take a paper and share it with their group. Each group is to act or sound like the animal while the rest of the class tries to guess what they are. (Small class, each child takes a paper.)

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Have you ever been in a barn or a stable? What are some of the sights, smells, and sounds you would find there?** (hay, straw, animal noises, etc.) **Would you like to live in a barn or stable? Why? Have you ever discovered something in a barn that you just couldn't wait to tell someone about? Let's read today's memory verse together.** Find and read Luke 2:17 aloud. Then ask: **Who do you think this verse is about? Yes, it tells about some people who visited a stable and saw someone special, then told everyone about it. Our message for today tells us ...**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- large paper wall banner started in Lesson 10
- pencils, markers, crayons

B. God's Graffiti

The children are to continue adding pictures, color, and praise to the wall banner started in Lesson 10.

Debriefing

Ask: **How do you like our banner now?** (It's getting prettier, etc.) **Today's message is about joyfully sharing what Jesus' birth means to you. Write on your banner what His birth means to you. Write praises to God for sending Jesus to our world. Then let's say our message together:**



I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS ABOUT JESUS.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study, and review last week's memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

Favorite Christmas Carols (*Sing for Joy*, nos. 70-84)
"Come and Praise the Lord Our King" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 5)



Mission

Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Say: **Now we have a chance to joyfully give God a money gift. This helps make a way to tell others about Jesus.**

You Need:

- container decorated with musical notes and the words "Praise Him!"



Prayer

Give each child a manger cutout. Ask them to write on one side of the manger the name of someone who needs prayer. Ask for volunteers to pray out loud for all the names listed.

You Need:

- manger cutout for each child (see p. 154)

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- stable scene with hay, etc.
- Bible-times costumes for shepherds, angels, Joseph, and Mary
- swaddling clothes (cloths) for "Baby Jesus"
- parents with a newborn (if possible) or a male baby doll
- children to act out the story
- sheep (stuffed toy, papier mâché, or drawn on poster board and cut out)
- *Sing for Joy* songbook

Experiencing the Story

Characters: Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, shepherds

Props: manger scene, Bible-times costumes, parents with a newborn (if possible) or a baby doll, sheep

This is a continuation of last week's "Experiencing the Story." Prompt the "actors" at the appropriate times. Again, you might want to invite the kindergarten class to watch your story time. At the designated places in the story, have the children sing carols. Start with the shepherds in the field with their sheep. Have the stable scene with Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus in another part of the room.

Read or tell the story.

[Shepherds are still sitting in the field after the angels left.] What wonderful news the angels had brought to the shepherds! What a choir they had heard! The shepherds couldn't sit still any longer. The angel had told them to find the Baby. They must go NOW! *[The shepherds get up and start walking to the stable. Everyone else sings together "O Children, Come Quick," verses 1 and 3 (Sing for Joy, no. 79).]*

The shepherds searched for the Baby. At last they found Him! *[Shepherds arrive at stable and look very happy.]* They entered the stable quietly and cautiously. Imagine how they felt when they got close enough to see just what the angels had said they would see. There was a newborn baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a feed box (also called a manger), on top of fresh hay!

Quickly they must have told the

exciting story *[shepherds gesture excitedly to Mary and Joseph]* about the angel choir and how thrilling it was, and that they believed this Baby was God's Son, their Savior! The Bible says that Mary treasured the news. *[Children sing together "Mary Had a Baby" (Sing for Joy, no. 80).]* *[Mary clasps her hands and smiles.]*

The shepherds probably wanted to touch this special Baby. Maybe they held their hands up to their faces in awe. *[Shepherds hold their hands over their faces.]* Or maybe they jumped for joy and slapped each other on the back as they smiled at the Baby. *[Shepherds jump for joy and (gently) slap each other on the back.]* They realized how blessed they had been to be visited by angels.

Leaving the stable *[shepherds leave the stable]*, they told everyone that the Savior of the world had just been born—a baby who was God's Son! It was just too exciting to keep to themselves. *[Sing together "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" (Sing for Joy, no. 83).]*

Lots of people heard about the Baby *[shepherds walk around the room, gesturing as if they are talking to people]*, but very few visited Him for themselves. *[Shepherds stand to the side while you finish the story.]* What would you have done?

To worship God may mean that we tell others about Him, as the shepherds did. Or we may praise Him silently for His love, as Mary did. Let's worship God and tell others how much He loves us. *[Sing together "Wonderful, Wonderful" (Sing for Joy, no. 39).]*

Debriefing

Say: **The angels and the shepherds couldn't wait to tell others about the birth of Jesus. If you had been there, what would you have done? We can be just like them, excited to share**

what we know about Jesus with our friends.

Ask: **How do you feel about Jesus' birth?** (excited, happy, thankful) **Will you tell others about Jesus' birth?**
Remember our message:



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS
ABOUT JESUS.**

Memory Verse

In advance,
have the memory
verse ("**When they
had seen him, they
spread the word**")
[Luke 2:17, NIV]
written and hidden
in the swaddling
clothes of the "baby."

Hold the baby
doll, unwrapping
some of the clothing to reveal the paper,
then read the memory verse aloud. Say:
**Our memory verse tells what hap-
pened after the shepherds saw Baby
Jesus. Let's say it together.**

Form two groups facing each other.
Have the first group say the first phrase
("**When they had seen him**"), then the
other responds, "**they spread the word.**"
Repeat several times, then reverse the
phrases. Finally, have all the children say
the entire verse.

Bible Study

In advance,
print the follow-
ing baby names
and matching
texts, one each
on five pieces of
paper.

You Need:

- baby in cloths from "Experiencing the Story"
- memory verse written on small piece of paper

You Need:

- Bibles
- five slips of paper
- chalkboard or dry-erase board
- chalk or dry-erase markers

Samuel	(1 Samuel 1:20)
Isaac	(Genesis 21:1-3)
John	(Luke 1:57-60)
Moses	(Exodus 2:1-4, 10)
Jesus	(Matthew 1:21)

Then write the following columns
where all can see:

Mothers	Babies
Hannah	Moses
Jochebed	Jesus
Elizabeth	Isaac
Mary	Samuel
Sarah	John

Distribute the papers and say: **Find out about some other babies God sent for a special purpose.** Have the children take turns reading the Scripture reference on their "baby." Briefly discuss God's purpose in each baby's life. Ask: **Which baby goes with which mother?** As the children respond, draw a line to match the mother with the right baby.

Debriefing

Say: **Jesus was sent for the greatest purpose of all—to save you and me and everyone else in the world from sin. You have a bright future because of Baby Jesus' birth. Do you want to tell others about it?**

The angels were so excited that they couldn't wait to announce Baby Jesus' birth. What can you do to announce Jesus' birth to someone? (Sing about it, talk about it, write about it, etc.) **Remember our message:**



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS
ABOUT JESUS.**

Say that with me.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- large cardboard box
- pieces of cardboard or soft wood
- hay or straw
- glue
- crayons, markers
- scissors
- photocopies of line drawings of cows, horses, donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, angels (see p. 147)

Through Their Eyes Nativity Diorama

Have the children color and cut out the photocopies. (See page 147.) Then have them arrange straw or hay in the box so that it looks like a barn. Attach the animals with tape at various places in the barn scene. Make a few feeding troughs from the cardboard pieces or soft wood. Place them near some of the animals. Add the other cutouts.

Point to the cutouts of the donkey, Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, sheep, shepherds, and angels. Have the children choose a cutout and tell about Jesus' birth from the viewpoint of the character they chose. Finally, ask them to tell what Jesus' birth means to them personally.

If possible, place the completed diorama in a place where others may enjoy it.

Debriefing

Allow response time as you ask: **Why do others need to know that Jesus came to earth? How do you feel about telling them? How do you choose to tell others about Jesus' birth?** (Encourage children to explain how they will share what they have learned about Jesus.) **Remember:**



**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS
ABOUT JESUS.**

Say that with me.

4

Sharing the Lesson

You Need:

- paper
- crayons, markers, pencils

Jesus' Birth Announcement

Using paper, markers, and pencils, have the children create a baby announcement that they will share with their friends. The announcement should include the following information:

- Who? Baby Jesus
 What? A Savior
 When? Bible doesn't say, but it's celebrated during Christmas season.
 Where? Bethlehem
 Why? To save the whole world from sin
 How? God made it happen.

Debriefing

Ask: **To whom will you give your announcement? (Wait for responses.) What will you say about the birth of Jesus? (Allow the children to share.) Let's pray that Jesus will give you just the right words to tell others about His birth. Remember our message:**



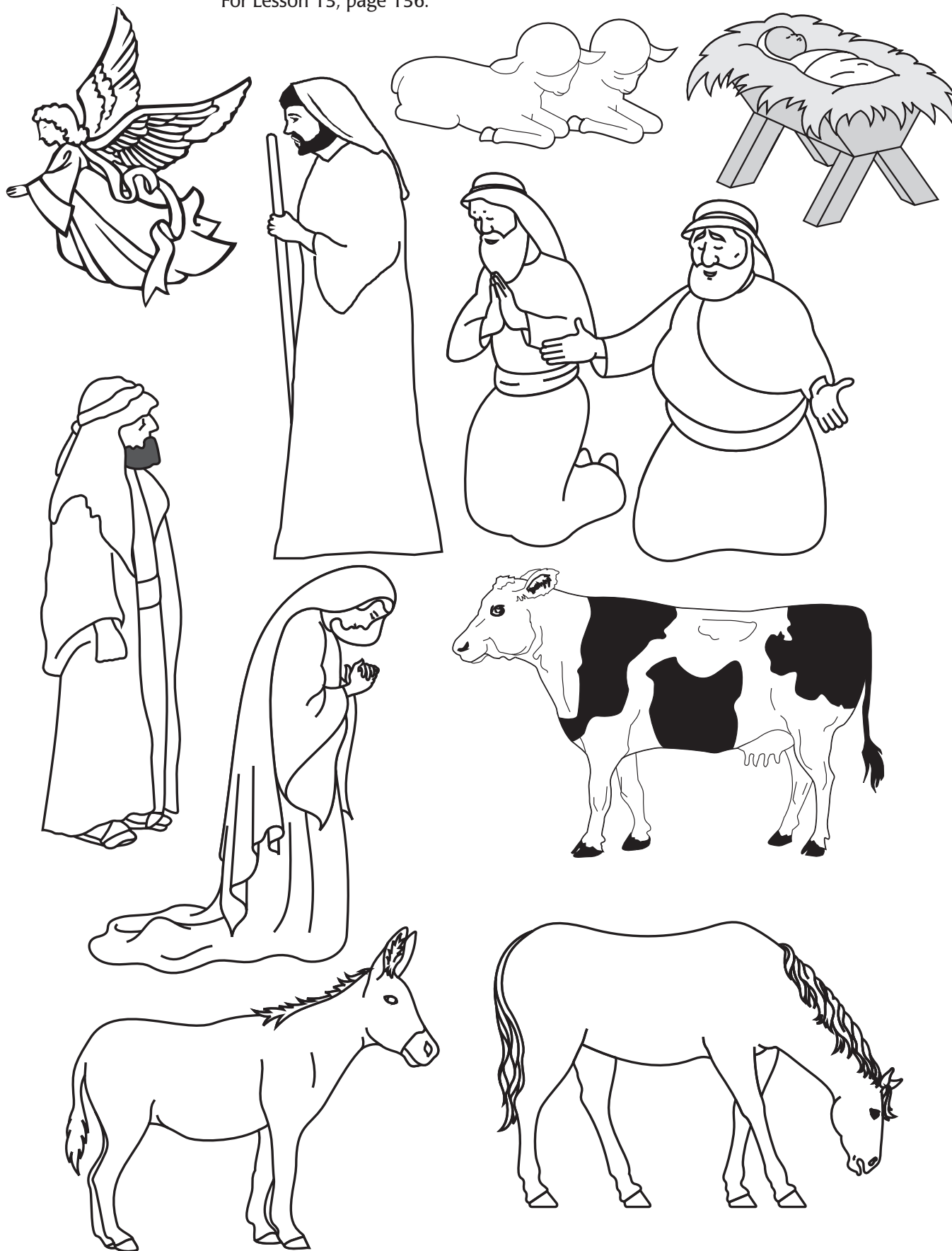
**I WORSHIP GOD WHEN I
JOYFULLY TELL OTHERS
ABOUT JESUS.**

Let's say that again.

Closing

Pray that Jesus will give each child the right words to tell others about His birth in the new week.

For Lesson 13, page 136.



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Spread the Joy

References

Luke 2:15-20; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 47, 48

Memory Verse

"When they had seen him, they spread the word" (Luke 2:17, NIV).

The Message

I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.

One night Grandma was telling Sabine about the day Sabine was born. "When you were born, I lived far away from your mom and dad. When your dad phoned me and said, 'You have a new granddaughter!' I was so excited. I wanted to get on a plane and come to see you right away. I couldn't wait!"

In our Bible story some people couldn't wait to see another newborn baby. Let's see what it's all about.

The bright choir of angels had faded into the distance. The shepherds were in the dark again, alone with their sheep. They looked at each other. All thoughts of being with the sheep were gone. Such wonderful news! With angels telling them to find Baby Jesus, they had to go now!

The shepherds hastened to Bethlehem. "Lying in a manger," the angel had said. That meant a stable. A place where animals were sheltered. Listening at every stable, the shepherds searched for the Baby. At last they found the right place.

The shepherds entered the stable quietly. Can you imagine how they felt? Curious? Would they see an ordinary child? They saw just what the angel had said they would—a newborn baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger, on top of fresh hay!

They had to explain why they were there. Quickly they must have told the exciting story about the shining angels. They must have told about the angel choir and the beautiful song. Did they say that they believed this Baby was God's Son, the one who was their Savior? Mary and Joseph must have had questions.

The Bible says that Mary treasured the news the shepherds brought. She must have loved God even more for His way of encouraging her. The shepherds' story must have helped Joseph believe God's word too.

Do you think the shepherds wanted to touch this special Baby? Maybe they held their hands up to their faces in awe. Or maybe they slapped each other on the back as they smiled at the Baby. They must have realized how blessed they had been to be visited by angels.

We don't know how long the shepherds stayed in the stable. But we do know that they bowed down and worshipped Baby Jesus. They knew He was their Savior!

Perhaps they left Bethlehem a little before dawn, as people were beginning to move about. Or perhaps others were finishing a night's work of some kind. The Bible says the shepherds "spread the word." They told everyone they met about seeing the Baby, God's Son. And "all who heard it were amazed" (Luke 2:17, 18, NIV). The shepherds returned to their sheep, praising God. They had seen the Messiah, just as they had been told.

And what of Mary and Joseph? How did they feel? "Mary treasured . . . all these things" and thought of them often (Luke 2:19). What would the future hold? How would she and Joseph raise this Child—the Son of God?

To worship God may mean that we tell others about



Him, as the shepherds did. Or we may thank Him silently for His love, as Mary did. But we can't worship God until we know for ourselves how much He loves us. Then we can worship Him by telling others about Jesus' birth and about how wonderful He is.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, with your family visit a place where animals are kept. Find a place to sit and read your Bible story together.
- Read Luke 2:17 together. What "word" did the shepherds spread? Have you "spread the word"?
- Sing "Now Is Born the Divine Christ Child" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 78). Then, thank God for Jesus' birth.

Sunday

- Together with your family, read and discuss Luke 2:15, 16.
- For Part 2 of your "TV newscast," make more pictures covering Jesus' birth. Today, draw and color pictures of the shepherds (1) traveling to Baby Jesus; and (2) at the stable. Write "The shepherds are looking for Jesus" on the first picture and "The shepherds find Baby Jesus" on the second. Glue or tape your pictures to the picture strip that you made last week.
- Say your memory verse without help.
- Sing "Away in a Manger" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 73 or 74). Ask Jesus to help you tell others about Him.

Monday

- Make a megaphone by rolling a piece of paper into a cone. Decorate it with angels. Use it to call your family to worship.
- With your family, read Luke 2:15, 16 again.
- Share with a friend Jesus' birth announcement that you made in Sabbath School. Tell what Jesus' birth means to you. (Or make a card about Jesus' birth. It should include: Who was born, where, when, and why.)
- Teach your memory verse to your family. Then, thank God for each person.

Tuesday

- During family worship, read and discuss Luke 2:17-19.
- Make a picture for your "TV newscast." Show

the shepherds praising God and telling everyone about Baby Jesus. Write your memory verse on it. Join the picture to those made Sunday.

- Thank God for Bible stories about Jesus.

Wednesday

- Make a tambourine to help you praise God. Place two paper plates together and punch holes around the edges. Weave some ribbon or yarn through the holes, leaving a small space. Pour in some dry beans. Then finish weaving and tie the ribbon.* Write "Praise God!" on your tambourine. Decorate it with angels and glitter.
- Say your memory verse; then play your tambourine and sing about Jesus' birth.

Thursday

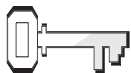
- Read Luke 2:20 for family worship.
- For worship, show your "TV newscast" about Jesus' birth, Part 2. You can review last week's pictures and finish with this week's pictures. Have soft music playing as you do your newscast.
- Say your memory verse together, then, thank Jesus for His love.

Friday

- With your family, have a birthday party for Jesus. Invite a friend who might not know Jesus. Decorate a birthday cake with "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" Sing "Happy Birthday to You" to Jesus. Read Luke 2:8-16.
- Take turns telling what Jesus' birth means to you.
- Sing "Silent Night, Holy Night" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 76). Say your memory verse. Then pray that Jesus will come again soon.
- If possible, sing Christmas carols to your neighbors and give them a small gift from your family.

*Adapted from *Bible Story Crafts and Projects Children Love* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1995), p. 62.

Too Many Offerings



References

Exodus 35:4–36:7;
*Patriarchs and
Prophets*,
pp. 343–349



Memory Verse

“I will sacrifice a
freewill offering to you;
I will praise your name,
Lord, for it is good”
(Psalm 54:6).



Objectives

The children will:
Know our offer-
ings spring from a
desire to worship God.

Feel willing to give
generously.

Respond by bring-
ing offerings
out of love.



The Message

I worship God with
my offerings.

Monthly Theme

We worship God every day.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Moses asks the Israelites to donate materials to construct the tabernacle, its furnishings, the other items used in the sanctuary service, and the priests' garments. He also asks for skilled workers to help with the spinning, weaving, and construction. Soon the workers tell Moses that they have more than enough to do all the work. Moses then tells the people not to bring any more gifts.

This is a lesson about worship.

Only those who were willing were asked to donate construc-
tion materials, and God only accepted offerings that were given
freely. The Israelites' love for God and a desire to worship Him
were the first step in constructing God's sanctuary. The people
responded so willingly and generously that they had to be asked
to stop giving. Children can also bring offerings to help care for
their church. Giving offerings is an act of worship, a response to
God's love.

Teacher Enrichment

It took a little more than a ton of gold, a little more than 3¾
tons of silver, and about 2½ tons of bronze to construct the tab-
ernacle and its furnishings. (See Exodus 38.) In today's currency,
the value of the metals alone would be more than US\$51 million.
The value of the materials points to the generosity of the Israelites
when they were asked to give from their hearts.

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Give It Away</i> B. <i>Link It Up</i>	Bible, small denomination coins, number spinners, small prizes Bible, 2" x 5" (5 cm. X 12 cm.) slips of paper, paper clips
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container used last week none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	Bible; paper cups; marker; mixing bowl(s); dry rice, beans, pasta, etc.; paper and pen/pencil Bible, paper, pen or marker Bibles, paper and pen/pencil
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Give It All</i>	Bible, paper and pencil, envelopes, double-stick tape
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>I Can Give</i>	paper bags, crayons/markers, art supplies

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Give directions for the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- Bible
- small denomination coins
- number spinners
- small prizes for winners

A. Give It Away

Divide the children into groups of four or five. Give each group one spinner and each child 10 coins. Explain that the object of the game is to be the first to give away all your money. Each child will take a turn spinning the spinner and giving to the other members of the group the number of coins equivalent to the number the spinner landed on. Coins may be given all to one person or spread around the group. The first person to give away all their money wins.

Debriefing

Ask: **Were you willing to give away your money today? Was it hard or easy to give it away? Why? Was it fun? Did you expect it to be? Did anyone ask you not to give them any more money?**

Say: **Our Bible story today tells about people who were so willing to worship God with their offerings that they had to be asked to stop giving.** Read aloud Psalm 54:6: **"I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good."** Our message today is:

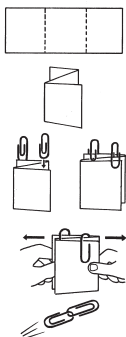


I WORSHIP GOD WITH MY OFFERINGS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bible
- slips of paper approximately 2" x 5" (5 cm. X 12 cm.)
- paper clips



B. Link It Up

Give each child a slip of paper and two paper clips.

Ask: **Have you ever thought your offering isn't much? Have you ever wondered what good it does? Your offering is like this paper clip.** Hold up one paper clip. **This paper clip**, hold up the other one, **is like someone else's offering.** Fold the paper and attach the paper clips according to the diagram shown in the margin. It is very important that you attach the paper clips exactly as shown. Show the children how to do the same.

Say: **When your offering is combined with the offering of others, they link together to do great things.** Pull apart the edges of the paper and the clips will fly together. **We're going to learn today about a time people's offerings all worked together to build something great for God.**

Debriefing

Read Psalm 54:6 with the children. Ask: **What does the word freewill mean?** Take answers. **The word freewill means to give something willingly, because you**

want to, without expecting something in return. Why do you bring an offering to church or Sabbath School? What do you get in return? Your offering is a way of worshipping God. And that's what we want to remember:



I WORSHIP GOD WITH MY OFFERINGS.

Say that with me.

(Adapted from Susan L. Lingo, "The Stupendous Paper Clip Hug," *Show Me! Devotions for Leaders to Teach Kids* [Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1997].)

Prayer and Praise

Any
Time



Fellowship

Report the children's joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study. Give a special, warm greeting to visitors and introduce each by name. Acknowledge birthdays or special events.



Suggested Songs

"We Give Our Gifts" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 146)
"Father, Accept This Gift" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 147)
"Father, I Adore You" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 21)
"God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13)



Mission

Say: **Our mission stories are about people who learn about Jesus because of the offerings we bring.** Use a story from *Children's Mission*.



Offering

Help the children identify something in the mission story for which their offering might be used or a way that it might help someone in the story learn or tell about Jesus.

You Need:

- container used last week



Prayer

In your prayer, ask God to give us hearts that are willing to praise and worship Him with our offerings.

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- Bible
- paper cups
- marker
- one or more small mixing bowls (depending on class size)
- dry rice, beans, pasta, pebbles, coins, sand, etc.
- paper with “You are a skilled craftsman” written on it
- paper with “You are a skilled spinner and weaver” written on it

Experiencing the Story

Begin by giving all but two students a paper cup filled with rice, beans, etc., and labeled one of the following: gold, silver, bronze, linen, goat hair, animal skins, spices, acacia wood, olive oil, gem stones. Give two students a paper cup with the slip of paper inside instead of rice, beans, etc.

Note: If you think anyone in your class will become upset at getting a slip of paper instead of rice, give both to some children. If you have a large class, you may want to designate several children as craftsmen. Plan this activity so that you pass out more rice, beans, etc., than will fit into the bowl or bowls into which the children will later pour them.

Tell the children that this story took place before Moses died. It happened while the Israelites were on their way to the Promised Land.

Read or tell the story.

Moses called the Israelites to assemble. He had something important to tell them. *[Ask the children to come sit closer to you on the floor, since they are the Israelites and you are Moses.]*

“God has told me something important,” Moses said. “He wants us to build a special tent of meeting—a place where God will come and dwell with us and where we will worship Him.

“It will take many fine and special materials to build this tabernacle, its furnishings, and the special clothes the priests will wear. We will need gold, silver, and bronze. We will need blue and purple and red yarn, and fine linen, and goat hair. We will need animal skins and spices, and acacia wood and olive oil, and gemstones.

“And we will need skilled workers too. We need craftsmen who can work with wood and metal. We need spinners and weavers to make the curtains and the special clothes for the priests.

“But God wants His special tent of meeting built with freewill offerings. He only wants you to give if you want to. Your heart should be moved by love for God and a desire to worship Him. If that’s how you really feel, you can bring your things to Bezalel and Oholiab. God has chosen them to direct this work. His Spirit has given them special skill and knowledge and the ability to teach others.

“We’ll be taking donations right away. You can bring anything you want to contribute to the building of God’s tabernacle and put it in these bowls. And if you are skilled in any of the areas where we need workers, let us know that, too.”

[Ask the children to bring up their “building materials” and pour them into the designated bowls. If your craftsmen don’t volunteer their services, prompt them by asking if anyone there is a skilled craftsman.]

[As they volunteer their services, say:]

Not everyone has gold or silver to donate, but the services of those who are skilled is an important offering too. God values our service as much as our money.

[As the bowls begin to fill, comment on how generous everyone has been with their things and their service. And then, when the bowls are full, say:] **You are so generous! We have enough. Please do not bring any more gifts.**

Debriefing

Ask: **What did you think when you heard that God wanted donations of gold and silver and all the other things**

for His tabernacle? Were you eager to give? Why? How did it feel to contribute to God's tabernacle?

For those who were skilled workers, how did it feel to know that you could actually help build the tabernacle? What did you think when Moses told you to stop bringing things—that the workers had more than enough?

What's our message today?



I WORSHIP GOD WITH MY OFFERINGS.

Memory Verse

To teach the memory verse, write each word on a separate large piece of paper. Mix up the papers, divide them among the children, then ask them to come forward and hold their paper in the right order as you read the text aloud. (**"I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good" [Psalm 54:6].**)

Mix the papers again and repeat. Do this at least three times, reading the text aloud. For the fourth time, call the children forward, but do not read the text. Repeat several times until most of the children know the verse.

Finally, form two groups. Have one repeat the first half of the verse (**"I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you"**), then the other responds antiphonally (**"I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good"**). Repeat several times.

You Need:

- Bible
- paper
- pen or marker

Bible Study

Before Sabbath School, write the four following texts each on a slip of paper.

1. 2 Kings 5:15, 16
2. 2 Chronicles 29:29-31
3. Ezra 7:15, 16
4. Mark 12:41-44

Give the papers to children who are willing to look up and read texts. Allow practice time. Before they read, explain the context in which each of these passages occurs.

1. 2 Kings 5:15, 16—Naaman has been cured of leprosy.
2. 2 Chronicles 29:29-31—After years of idol worship, King Hezekiah purifies and reconsecrates the Temple and people.
3. Ezra 7:15, 16—God's people are returning to Jerusalem after 70 years of captivity in Babylon. King Artaxerxes gives gifts to Ezra to take with him to Jerusalem.
4. Mark 12:41-44—Jesus is in the Temple.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do all these instances of offerings and gifts in the Bible have in common?** Read aloud 2 Corinthians 9:7. If the children haven't figured it out, say: **God loves a cheerful giver.**

Ask the children to repeat the memory verse, Psalm 54:6: **"I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good."** What's our message today?



I WORSHIP GOD WITH MY OFFERINGS.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- Bibles
- slips of paper with Bible verses on them

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- Bible
- slips of paper
- a pen
- envelopes
- double-stick tape

Give It All

Write the following words on pieces of paper:

10 cents
\$1
\$10
\$100
\$1,000
my hands
a nice singing voice
a coat that's too small
old toys
the ability to read well
talent with a musical instrument

Place one slip in each envelope and seal the envelopes.

Give the envelopes to different students. Ask them to open their envelope and read to the class what they have to give to the Lord as an offering. After they have read their paper, ask them to come

forward and tape their paper to their chest so everyone in class can see it and remember what it says.

Ask the class to arrange the students in the order of the most important offering to the least important offering.

Debriefing

Ask: **Are any offerings more important than others?** Read aloud Exodus 35:5-10. **Which of these materials was the most important? Could the tabernacle be made without any of them?**

What's the most important thing about our offering? Read 2 Corinthians 9:7 aloud again if they can't remember. Ask the children to name ways each of the items can be used by God.

When we bring our gifts, we worship God. Let's say our message together.



I WORSHIP GOD WITH MY OFFERINGS.

4

Sharing the Lesson

I Can Give

Give each student a paper sack. Ask them to decorate their sack to say "My Offering for God." Encourage them to take their sack home and collect items in it that they can actually give as offerings to God for His sanctuary, their church. Ask them to bring their sacks to Sabbath School next week.

Debriefing

Ask: **What can we bring as an offering?** (money, candles, songbooks, offering basket, paper products, toy stuffed animals for beginner Sabbath

School class, cleaning supplies, etc.)

Say: **During this week, talk with your family about gifts you can bring as an offering for God's house, your church. Collect items in your sack and bring your sack to Sabbath School next week. Tell your family about this week's lesson and say your memory verse. Remember, our message says ...**



I WORSHIP GOD WITH MY OFFERINGS.

Closing

Have the children place their sacks on a table and stand around the table. Ask God to bless them as they plan to bring their offerings next week.

You Need:

- paper bags
- crayons, markers
- art supplies

Too Many Offerings

References

Exodus 35:4–36:7;
Patriarchs and
Prophets,
pp. 343-349

Memory Verse

"I will sacrifice a
freewill offering to
you; I will praise
your name, Lord,
for it is good"
(Psalm 54:6, NIV).

The Message

I worship God with
my offerings.

*"Enough! Enough!" laughed Dad. "I have
enough on my plate already."*

*Mother smiled. "What about you, Josh?
Do you have enough on your plate?"*

*Josh grinned. He knew what his mother
was thinking. He would eat everything on his
plate and ask for more! And she would tease
him about eating like a horse!*

*When is enough enough? A long time
ago Moses told the Israelites, "Don't bring
any more. We have more than enough."
Here's how it happened.*

"Quick," called Father breathlessly as
he stuck his head inside the tent. "Moses
has an important announcement to
make. The entire Israelite community is
gathering."

Mother dropped what she was doing
and grabbed the baby. Leah was close on
her heels, followed by her younger broth-
ers Zibeon and Gershon. The family was
quickly joined by other Israelite families, all
gathering to hear what Moses had to say.

Soon Moses stood up to speak. The
low murmur of the crowd stopped.

*"God has given me instructions
for a tent of meeting,"*

*Moses began. "A spe-
cial place where God
will meet with us
and where we will
worship Him. We
will need a lot of
fine materials.*

*"Only those
who want to
should contrib-
ute," continued
Moses. "We will
need gold, sil-
ver, and bronze.
We will need
yarn in blue,
purple, and*

*scarlet. We need fine linen. We need ani-
mal skins, acacia wood, olive oil, spices,
and gemstones. You should donate only
if your heart has been moved by God.
Your gifts will be an offering to Him.*

*"We will also need skilled crafts-
men of every kind," continued Moses.
"Spinners and weavers to help us prepare
the materials. People who can work in
gold, silver, and bronze. We need people
who know how to cut and set stones.
Carpenters to work with wood. Spinners
to spin goat hair and linen. And weavers
to make curtains and the special gar-
ments the priests will wear.*

*"Bezalel of the tribe of Judah and
Oholiab of the tribe of Dan will be in
charge of the workers and the work,"
Moses went on. "God's Spirit has filled
them with skill and knowledge and the
ability to teach others to do this special
work."*

As soon as Moses stopped talking, a
buzz of excitement spread through the
crowd. "Mother," Leah began excitedly,
"we can help in a lot of ways! You're one
of the best spinners and weavers in the
whole camp. I'll watch the baby so you
can spin."

"And we have a bronze mirror and
comb," chimed in Zibeon. "Moses said
they need bronze."

"And Leah and Mother have gold jew-
elry," added Gershon.

"We do have gold earrings and brace-
lets," agreed Leah. Her best friend in Egypt
had given her the bracelets the night they
had left.

The next day the family excitedly
gathered their items. Together they took
them to the place where the building
materials were being collected. Piles were
beginning to form. Gold jewelry here,
silver over there. Bronze bowls and other
utensils a little farther on. Animal skins,
acacia wood, goat hair, and linen each
had their own stack. Excitement filled the
air, making it feel like a joyous holiday.



Every day Leah and Zibeon and Gershon walked past the growing piles of materials.

Then one day the builders told Moses, "We don't need any more materials. We have more than enough now." So Moses told the people to stop donating.

The people of Israel had come through. They loved God very much. They wanted to see the tabernacle built too.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If the weather is nice, walk with your family and sit outdoors by a nearby church. Read Exodus 35:4–36:7 together. Then, think about *your* church. What can you give or do to make it a better place to worship God?
- Sing together "What Joy It Is to Worship Here" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 142). Then, thank God for your church.
- Teach your memory verse to your family. What is a sacrifice? What is a freewill offering?

Sunday

- During worship, read your lesson story together. What did the Israelites give to help build the sanctuary? Make a list. Then, list things your family could give to make your church a special place for God.
- Show your family your "My Offering for God" sack from Sabbath School. Be sure it's OK to collect things in it.
- Sing together "God Made Our Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 57). Then thank God for people who support your church.

Monday

- In your own words, tell your lesson story to your family. Ask each one to tell about a time they sacrificed something for God. Would they do it again? Why? What is the difference between a freewill offering and a sacrifice offering? Invite each one to put something in your "My Offering for God" sack.
- Ask the men and boys in your family to say the first part of the memory verse. Then ask the women and girls to say the last part together.

Tuesday

- Before worship today, draw a picture to show what it was like when the Israelites brought things for the tabernacle. Show your picture to your

family and tell them about it. Keep adding things to your "My Offering for God" sack.

- Ask someone to read Exodus 35:4 through 36:7. What kind of craftsmen were needed? What kind would be needed to build a church today? What offerings would be needed? Thank God for people who make your church beautiful.

Wednesday

- For worship read Psalm 54:6 together. Read the first part of verse 7 to find out why David wrote this. From what "troubles" has God delivered your family? Thank Him for His goodness.
- Sing together "God Is So Good" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 13).
- Pray a "popcorn" prayer. The leader prays "Thank You, God, for . . .," then each person adds something for which they are thankful. At the end everyone says "Thank You, God, for everything."

Thursday

- During worship, read 2 Corinthians 9:7 together. Have someone write the last five words on a big sheet of paper. Ask each person to add a picture to show what they will cheerfully give God this week. The others should guess what it is.
- Say your memory verse together. Sing a praise song, then, thank God for the leaders in your church.

Friday

- Ask your family to help you act out your Bible story for worship today. Who will weave? spin? work with wood? Who will be Moses? What will that person say?
- Count the items in your "My Offerings for God" bag. How many? What kind of things? Remember to take them to Sabbath School tomorrow. Sing together "The Family of God" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 139).
- Pray that you will always be willing to give offerings freely.

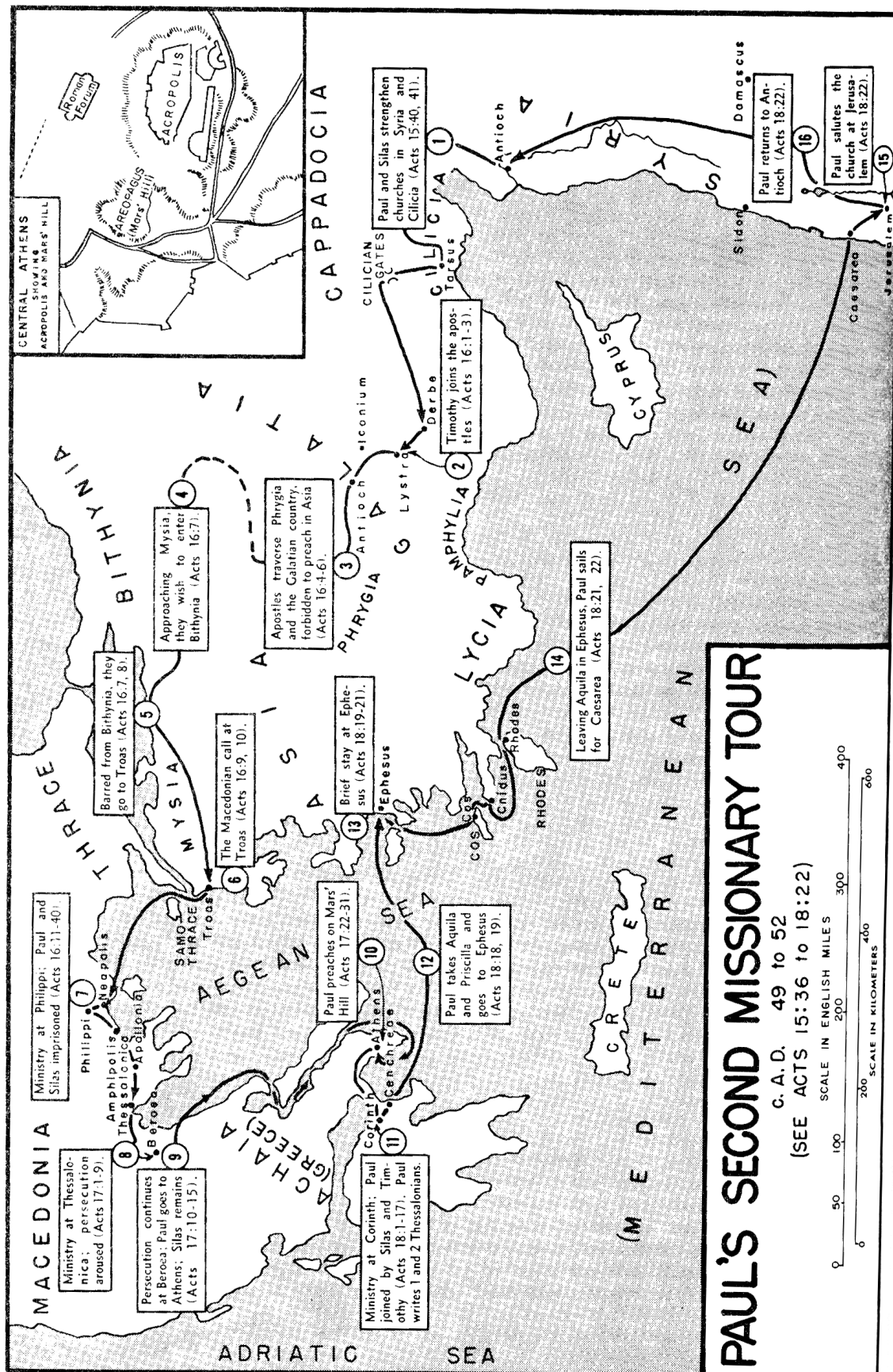
My Memory Verses

1. "Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality" (Romans 12:13, NIV).
2. "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21, NIV).
3. "Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people" (Ephesians 6:7, NIV).
4. "God . . . will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them" (Hebrews 6:10, NIV).
5. "Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for" (Isaiah 6:7, NIV).
6. "The Lord will do what he has promised" (Isaiah 38:7, NIV).
7. "[O Lord,] we are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8, NIV).
8. "The gracious hand of my God was on me" (Nehemiah 2:8, NIV).
9. "You know . . . that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled" (Joshua 23:14, NIV).
10. "Praise be to the Lord because he has come to his people and redeemed them" (Luke 1:68, NIV).
11. "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior" (Luke 1:46, 47, NIV).
12. "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14, KJV).
13. "When they had seen him, they spread the word" (Luke 2:17, NIV).
14. "I will sacrifice a freewill offering to you; I will praise your name, Lord, for it is good" (Psalm 54:6, NIV).



SEVENTH-DAY
ADVENTIST
CHURCH





Who Had Open House?

Text	Who opened their home	Person(s) visiting
Luke 10:38	_____	_____
2 Kings 4:8	_____	_____
Genesis 19:1, 2	_____	_____
Acts 16:13-15	_____	_____
Acts 18:1-3	_____	_____
Acts 18:24-26	_____	_____

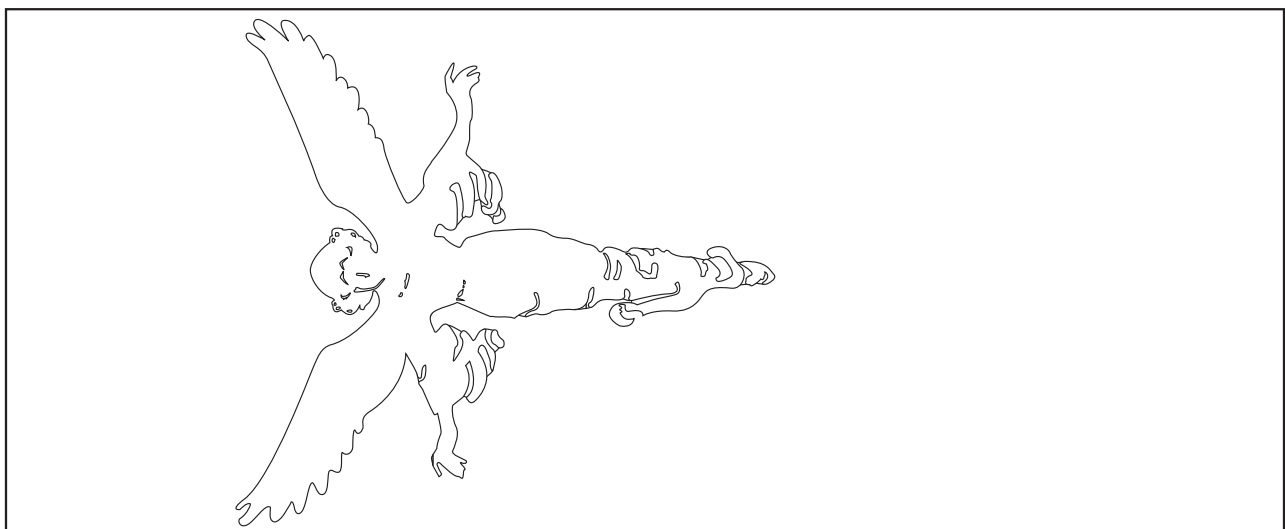
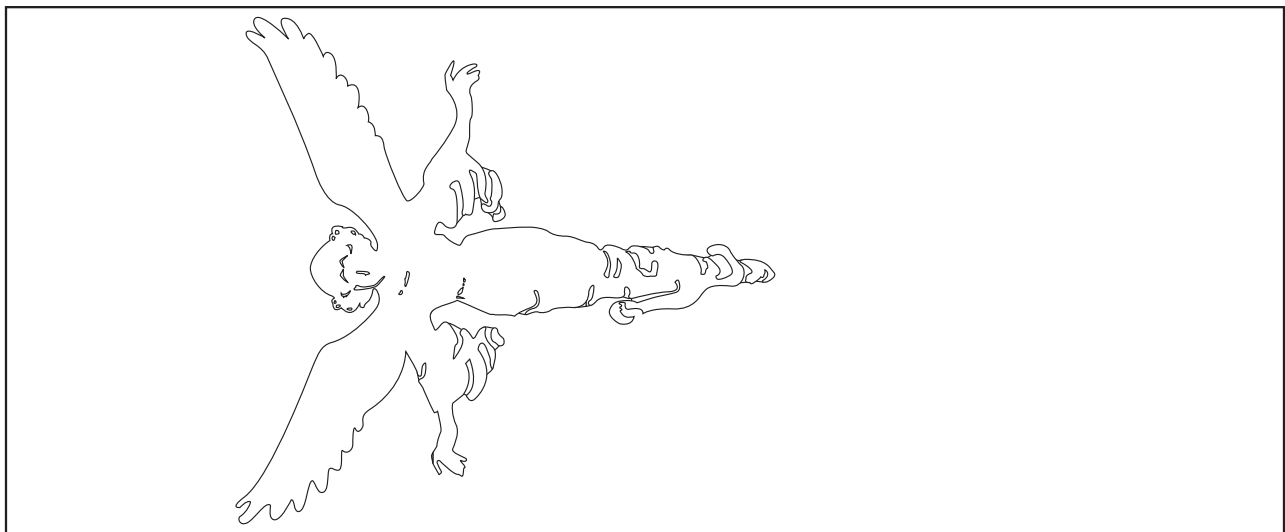
Who Had Open House?

Text	Who opened their home	Person(s) visiting
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2 Kings 4:8	_____	_____
Genesis 19:1, 2	_____	_____
Acts 16:13-15	_____	_____
Acts 18:1-3	_____	_____
Acts 18:24-26	_____	_____

Who Had Open House?

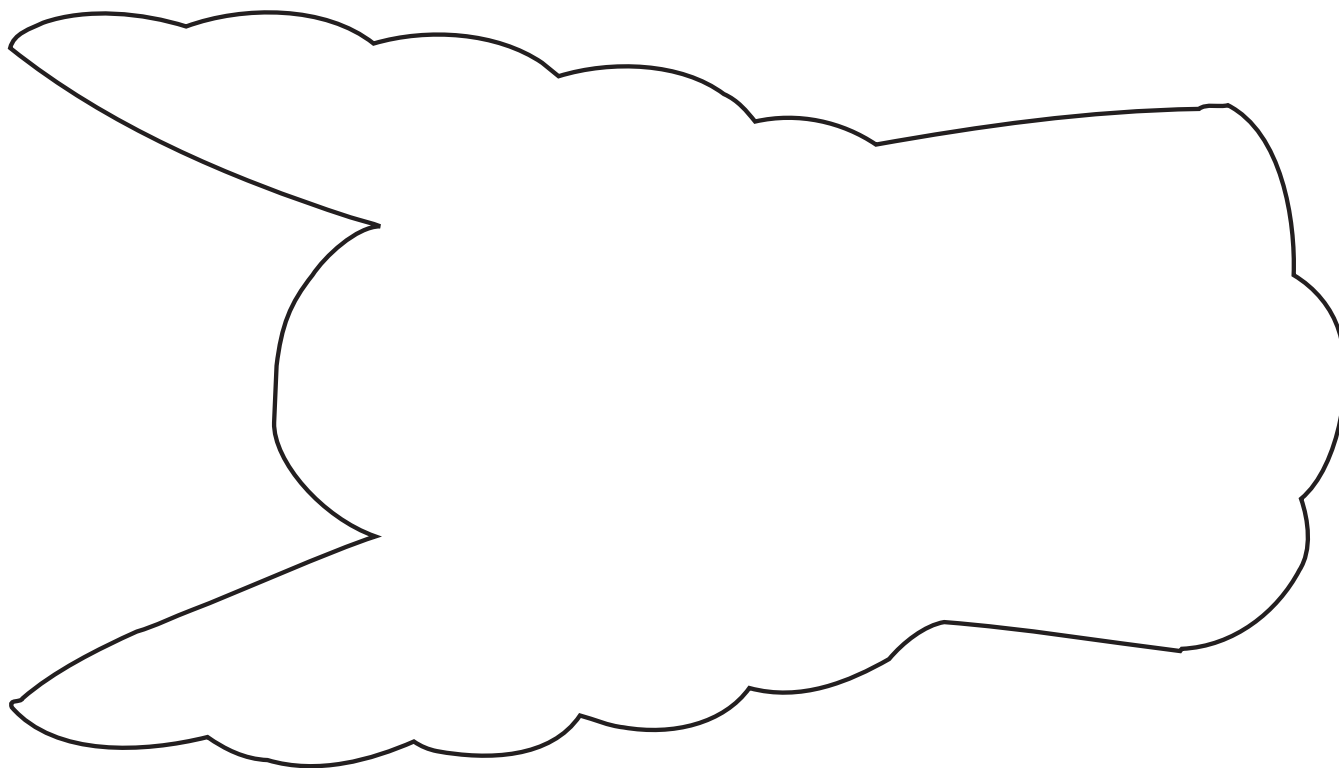
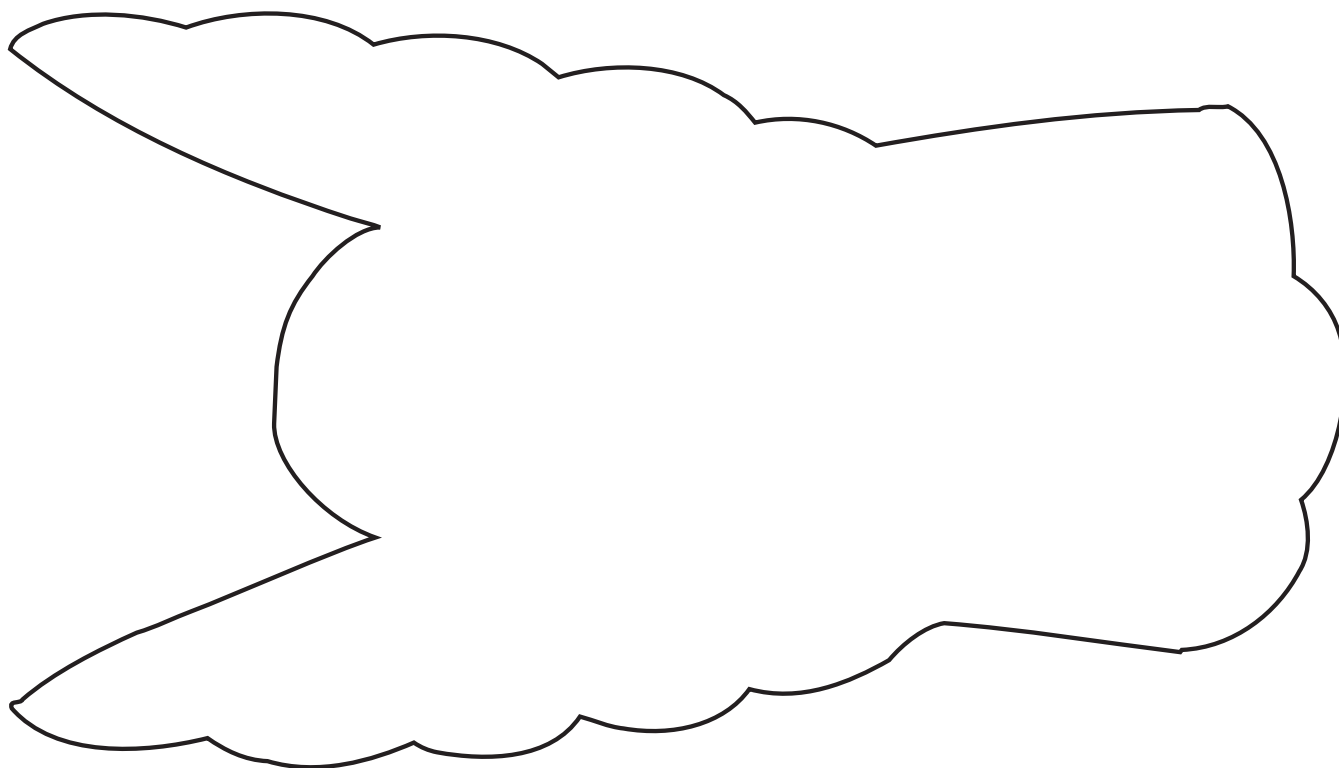
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Acts 18:24-26	_____	_____

For Lesson 11, page 117.

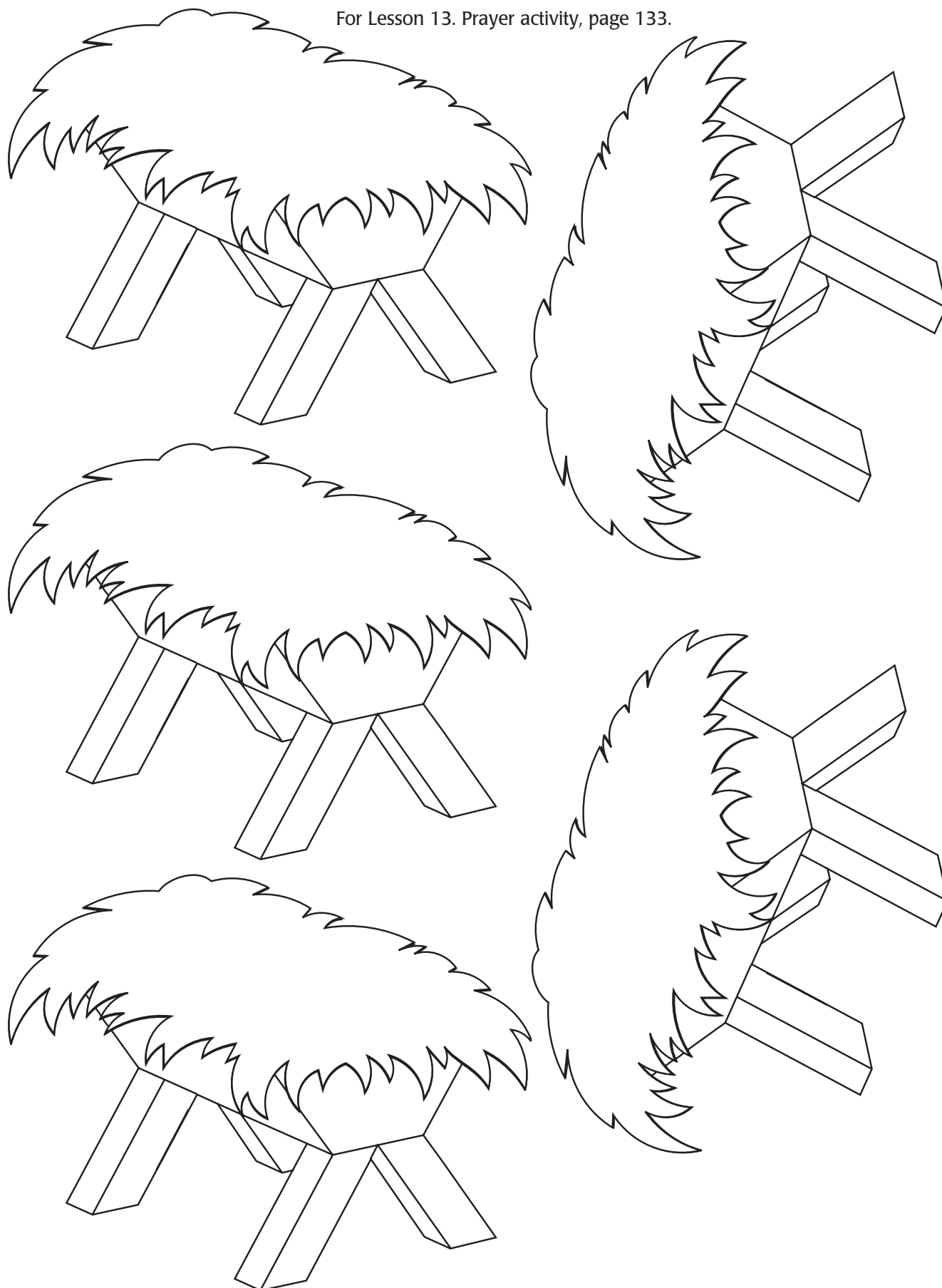


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For Lesson 12, pages 122 and 125.



For Lesson 13. Prayer activity, page 133.



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